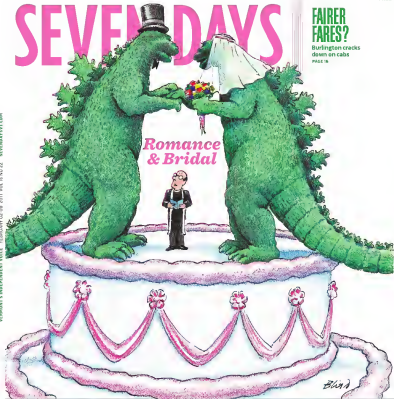


SEVEN DAYS

FAIRER FARES?

Burlington cracks
down on cabs
PAGE 18

Romance & Bridal



SMOKIN' FAVORS

PAGE 28

Hand-rolled cigars on the big day



SINGLE FILE

PAGE 30

Seven Days daters tell all



FOOD SWINGS

PAGE 40

Montpeier's culinary changes



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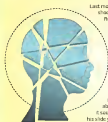
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Evil or Mentally Ill?



Last month, six people died and 12 more were wounded in a shooting spree at a supermarket in Tucson. First, where Rep. Gabrielle Giffords was holding a constituent event. Accused gunman Jared Loughner has since been charged with attempted assassination of a federal official.

Commentators across the country have speculated about what led to the shootings—repeatedly referring to them as “evil.” Last week, Burlington playwright James Lantz penned a personal essay in which he argues that Loughner isn’t evil—he’s mentally ill. The essay appeared on *BLAT*, the *Seven Days* staff blog.

“I know mental illness,” writes Lantz. “I’ve seen it. It’s up close and unfiltered. And the more I read about this young man, the more I realize the more it eerily seems similar to somebody close to me—and his slide years earlier... The tragedy last month was not the result of failed parenting, weak gun laws, a bad community college or inflated national rhetoric. Instead, the sound head in Tucson on level sunny Saturday morning was the great sweep of our weak commitment to the mentally ill breaking and this time it broke bad.”

Read Lantz’s essay at sevendaysvt.com and read about Gov. Shumlin’s proposed cuts to Vermont’s mental health services in this week’s “Fair Game” on p. 16.

facing facts



LAST SHOT

Vermont’s only confirmed b-h term—the First Executive—has finally landed under federal government. (Keep dreaming.)



BUT PROBABLY

Burlington police reported a “terror plot” for already landed this week. (What’s the deal?—you decide.)



VERMONT IS FOR FIGHTERS

Will Montross, a glaucoma doctor, is now on the site of the Civil War battle at Farmington. (We’re still fighting “bad ideas.”)



BAD LUCK

An eleven-hour don’t-willie-up-not-one-but-four-bounce-complexion-affordable-in-Burlington. (Don’t be ready for mountain don’t-willie-up-not-one-but-four-bounce-complexion-affordable-in-Burlington.)

FACE FACTS COMPILED BY PAUL KIRKPATRICK



840

That’s how many Facebook users are fans of the page “Doug Black Beach Lounge.” Longtime *Sevens* member whose Facebook profile was removed after she posted photos of her in the underwear of her son, according to the *Northshore Reporter*.

TOP FIVE

MOST POPULAR BLOG POSTS FROM JAN. 29 - FEB. 5

1. “**Heads Not Tails in Ben Egan**” — “**Wish Reef**” by Lauren Clay. (Heads not in being. Ben Egan’s not in being. Ben Egan’s not in being.)
2. “**Well Out the Bottle**” by Dorian. (They’re not out the bottle. They’re not out the bottle. They’re not out the bottle.)
3. “**Is Vermont’s State to Still Ready for the Big One?**” by Peter. (Vermont’s 39-year-old being—ready, one could be expected this year—or so-called.)
4. “**Free Game**” — “**Verment and Vermont**” by Peter. (They’re not. They’re not. They’re not.)
5. “**The Anti-Party**” by Peter. (They’re not. They’re not. They’re not.)

blogworthy last week...

SEVENDAYSVT.COM/BLOGS



100 Loughner’s sound off about “evil.” (Loughner’s sound off about “evil.”)



100 A letter to the editor about the state’s first case. (A letter to the editor about the state’s first case.)



100 Lantz’s essay about the state’s first case. (Lantz’s essay about the state’s first case.)



100 A letter to the editor about the state’s first case. (A letter to the editor about the state’s first case.)



100 A letter to the editor about the state’s first case. (A letter to the editor about the state’s first case.)

tweet of the week:

@timedivides

What’s the best of the week? (What’s the best of the week?)

What’s the best of the week? (What’s the best of the week?)

What’s the best of the week? (What’s the best of the week?)

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THAT'S NOT ITALIAN

The cover of *Seven Days*, depicting Dick Morris as a gadfly, is not amusing. Would you have depicted Gore Steinhilber as a lion about to devour the Sicilian to a whine?

Italian Americans — and persons of Italian origin everywhere — have been victimized by the Mafia for too long to have its vicious, archaic culture now used to threaten and intimidate us. You're making fun of the victims.

Italians have their own very serious political issues right now. Berlusconi, also of course, but an electronic who allegedly supports him and supports a strongly anti-immigrant agenda. Vermont's constitution, among which I proudly count *Seven Days*, should be fierce guardians of diversity and tolerance and embrace — not ridicule — the vast humanitarian legacy of Italian civilization of which the Mafia — and fascists — see destructive aberrations.

Louis Martin Lerner
BURLINGTON

PICK YOUR BOTTLE BATTLES

What about the bottle pickup? Kim Pearce's discussion of proposed bottle-bill revisions leaves them completely out of the picture. [The Vermont's Bottle Bill, Ready for Recycling?] January 26] However, we do have a lot in the article from the lobbyists for the beverage association. Frankly, I don't care much about the profits of the wholesale beverage industry, but I do care about the small army of pickup who work hard every day to keep the streets free of rumbleable glass and aluminum. Why is our bottle bill not celebrated as a more triumph of the free market? And where is the basic consideration between holding the manufacturers responsible for proper packaging (bottle) and holding on to an expanded deposit bottle bill that has worked well?

Andrew Saxon
BURLINGTON

GUNS AND KIDS DON'T MIX

Thanks for an excellent article exposing, yet again, the incredible indifference that the pro-gun lobby in our state has shown to its effect upon our legislators and patients, even at the expense of child safety [“Firing Line,” January 26].

I was particularly disappointed at the quote from Sen. Anthony Pollina, for whom I have voted in the past. His suggestion that the law regarding safe storage of

firearms now proposed in the legislature (H.100) is a “knee-jerk reaction to recent events” is preposterous and insulting to all of us who have been working for years in diligent and careful ways that respect excellent research showing such laws save lives and prevent suicide. Shame on him for a knee-jerk statement.

The suicide trend in that article is the second-leading cause of death for Vermont teens 10-19 years of age, and most youth suicide in this state is carried out

with guns. True, as Mr. Calkins points out, guns are widely accessible to youth in our state. But we don't have to accept the false statement that “sometimes things [kill] happen” as a result.

There is a widespread agreement among groups across the spectrum, from the NRA to the American Academy of Pediatrics, that guns should be locked up and stored without ammunition when kept in homes with children. Certainly this should be a common-sense issue for owners in homes where anyone is felt to be at significant risk of self-harm.

This child-safety law would not in any way restrict the rights of anyone to keep or bear arms, it simply codifies that owners have a responsibility to store them in a way that minimizes the risk of serious injury or death. There are no provisions to enter homes or check for safe storage — these laws only apply in the event that injury has resulted from reckless storage.

I hope that legislators will have the courage to look seriously at this bill and will see that it can help to protect our young people without infringing on anyone's rights.

Elisabeth HMO
BURLINGTON

Dr. Nelson is a professor of pediatrics at the University of Vermont College of Medicine.

FEEDBACK: 608-875-1111

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SATURDAY 6

Hire and Higher

and a partner not **Jessie Treanor-Kane** says you have to dance. With his achieve-ments ranging from the 2000 Ruyshope Music Awards Best New and Emerging Artist to one of 500 25 Most Stylish Men in the World in 2010, you would go to interview the male. Luckily he's just as good in person as on paper. Hear him old-time, all-country at Higher Ground Showcases Lounge this weekend.

SEE CURRENT DATE ON PAGE 99A

Top of Sunshine

When the **Carolina Chocolate Crops** harvested 2005, its three members regularly polished their craft by joining with a flaxseed insect fighter. That respect for the history of strong rural music shines throughout their repertoire of twangs down home, ranging such as "Carolina Red" and "Bittertwang."

The Sea Unfolds the New Day

House into an old-time dance hall on Saturday with tunes that will make you take two.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 12

Sound Choice

Orchestra Kwartet Topically, the new "first" episode of "work" (all-blooded) got "work" going" points to the LHM LHM Series on Friday. Music: Much more conductors (all) "work" for Saturday, 3, Prokofiev's *War* (1943) and Tchaikovsky's *Serenade* for strings.

© 2005 Blackwell Publishing Ltd *Journal of Internal Medicine* 258: 105–112

SATURDAY 5

Stomping Grounds

What an aster — in its crystalline form, anyway. The 15th annual **Snowshed Festival** offers heaps of opportunities for trapping through snowed-out-gullied nature excursions to work shops for glass building, and dog sledding, and frost-set beauty while learning how to make the complex.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 6A

CONFIRMING

Spectacular Spectacular

Last summer, Shelburne Museum brought us "Circus Day in America: 1870-1950". Now WPM's Fleming Museum of Art offers three thrilling, award-winning exhibits: "Under the Big Top: The Fine Art of Circus in America," "Georges Rouault, Cirque de l'Étoile Filante," and "Masked Spectacle: Commedia dell'Arte and Bread & Puppet Theater." Here's an easy opportunity to run across to the big top.

SEE ALSO: [REVENUE-DRIVEN FINANCING](#)

WEDNESDAY 9

Catch the Buzz

If you heard **Human Wave™** on the radio, you'd likely wonder what instrument produces the exotic textures and tones in the instrumental's lush, evocative soundscapes. That instrument is actually the human voice, engaged in the ancient art of Tibetan throat singing. See it in action at www.humanwave.com.

SEE CALENDAR SPOTLIGHT ON PAGE 33

SATURDAY 5

Weather or Not

It's the time of year to revel upon the weather. No one captures Vermont's seasons — all five of them — quite like Putney's Sandpiper Theater in ***All Weather Melrose: A Love Story***. A rich mix of puppetry, original folk songs, comedy, tragedy and the requisite cursing of the elements, this performance follows two Vermonters through the years. See it at St. Johnsbury School Centerstage or at Last August Theater, Winooski, February 10-13.

SEE CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 58

everything else.

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Money Madness

Last March, the five Democratic candidates for governor promised hundreds of individuals with disabilities — along with their parents and advocates — they wouldn't let mean ol' Gov. **JOHN DOUGLASS** reduce their services.

Fast forward 10 months: Three of those Democrats are now defending a budget proposal that would cut another \$5 million from the state's community mental health and developmental disability system. We're talking about Gov. **FLETCHER GUNAWAN**, Human Services Secretary **EDWIN RABIN** and top *Shantale* aide **HEATHER BARTLEY**.

Here's what the trio had to say less than a year ago:

Shantale: "We do this group therapy session once or twice a week, and this is definitely the largest group we've been to. That's because the people in this room have more at stake in this election than anyone else in Vermont."

To much applause, Rabin added, "I don't believe our values are negotiable just because we're in difficult times." Bartley promised the legislators would not "pass a budget that leaves you by the side of the road."

Over the past three years, the state's \$200 million-plus mental health support system has absorbed \$15 million in cuts, according to **JOAN TRINER**, executive director of Vermont Council of Developmental and Mental Health Services. The council represents the regional mental health providers and was the sponsor of last year's March event.

The trio has since changed its tune. **Shantale** is upset about \$1 million in corrections savings that will go into substance abuse, housing and counseling services, but admits he and Rabin will be working with community mental health providers to "mitigate the pain as much as possible." Rabin hopes to help find "efficiencies" in the system.

Triner and health providers have already addressed the cost of technology upgrades, home visits and burgeoning health insurance costs without help from the state or feds.

"The hospitals and health care insurance companies, on the other hand, have asked for and been granted rate increases to cover their costs," said Triner. "Also, there is emphasis on support for prevention and primary care in health care, and that is what we're doing as the mental health side. That's what makes it hard to

understand these proposed cuts."

The budget cuts, if approved, would boost caseloads for mental health workers from 35 to nearly 60 in some parts of the state. But cuts for outpatient services would increase from weeks to months, Triner said. It will also mean that many adults now living independently would get less support and be at greater risk of ending up back in group homes, hospitalized — or worse.

FLOYD NEASE, executive director of the consumer-based Vermont Association for Mental Health, said he was "shocked" by Rabin's budget proposal. As House Majority Leader, Nease led the charge against Douglas' budget cuts because of their potential impact on the most vulnerable.

WE COULD CHOOSE PEOPLE OVER PAVEMENT.

**FLOYD NEASE,
VERMONT ASSOCIATION
FOR MENTAL HEALTH**

The state should redirect some of the \$12 million being saved by cancelled plans to build a 10-bed secure residential mental health facility on regional mental health services, Nease said.

He also has another suggestion.

"I know this sounds odd coming from a guy who helped get three bridges replaced in his district, but you could stop all asphalt paving projects and not have to make these cuts," said Nease. "We could choose people over pavement."

Meeting of the Mayors

Last week's public hearing on Burlington Telecom was as much about the 2012 mayor's race as about a beleaguered municipal telecom that owes taxpayers \$77 million.

Candidates **DANIEL PAUL** (D-Ward 6), **JOAN SWANSON** (D-Ward 5) and **JOEY WILSON** (R-Ward 4) — all considered possible mayoral candidates — took great

pleasure to distance themselves from the BT debacle, while lobbing pot shots at Burlington Mayor **BERNARD**.

Despite calls for his resignation and demands that he apologize to voters, Kim didn't rise to the bait — or even make his voice.

Each of the three "candidates" counselors did his or her best to represent the "mayor."

Swanson reminded residents that the council took the lead in creating a Blue Ribbon Panel, a special audit committee to review the city's and BT's financials. It also disavowed BT's use of the cash pool.

Paul took Kim to task for spreading misinformation. The mayor continues to claim that BT would now be financially stable if the administration had been allowed to negotiate a deal with Paper Jiffy in late 2009. Even the consultants hired to turn BT around admitted that notion was folly.

That the council went along with some of Kim and Chief Administrative Officer **ANDREW LEOPOLD**'s plans should not be seen as an act of complicity. Wright insisted, "Could we have figured this thing out?" asked Wright. "It was a trust issue. We trusted that the administration was not doing what we later found out it was."

Wright urged Kim to admit "serious mistakes were made" as a way to rebuild trust in city government.

Kim didn't wince, insisting that he and Leopold have only had the city's best interests in mind.

Off the Block

The 64 residents at Wharf Lane in Burlington were spared eviction last week as the very day it was scheduled to happen. The Burlington Housing Authority and the Vermont Housing Finance Agency backed a deal to buy both Wharf Lane and neighboring Bolden Mill apartments from Pataquiz Properties, according to **PAUL REYNOLDS**, BHFA's executive director.

Detman said the agreement — to be signed off on officially this week — would set a near-term purchase of Wharf Lane well with a closing on the Bolden Mill no later than December 2013.

One clarification: In last week's column, I referenced the annual revenues of Pataquiz Construction — not Pataquiz Properties. Although the former company still bears the family name, it is now employee-owned. The

leaders sold the company to its 700 workers a few years ago.

A Socialist Among Capitalists

Sen. **BARACK OBAMA** (D-VT) eight-hour lecture about the evils of capitalism, combined with his criticism of the Federal Reserve, have earned him a seat on the Congressional Joint Economic Committee. No doubt.

This 10-member panel holds hearings, performs research and advises Congress on the economy. It was established by the Employment Act of 1946, with the charge to make "a continuing study of matters relating to the U.S. economy."

Obama's own campaign economics have greatly inspired thanks to his mid-December "Pillarsize." He now has \$55,000 cash on hand, according to his most recent Federal Election Commission report.

Whole Lotta Shakin'g

In an odd-numbered year, with no general election in sight, the major parties tend to rearrange the deck chairs.

Vermont Democratic Party Executive Director **ROBERT BENNETT** announced last weekend he is calling it quits as soon as a successor is found, while Vermont Republican Party Chairman **STEVE LAMARCA** announced two weeks ago he's leaving his post, too.

Former GOP lawmaker and gubernatorial race **PAUL BORDOWITZ** is emerging as a lead candidate among the Rs. McDonald ran Lt. Gov. **PAUL GARY**'s winning 2002 campaign — just one of two GOP candidates to be elected to statewide offices.

The other was Auditor **TOM GILKIN**. **DAVE BAKER**, chairman of the Bennington County GOP previously ran for the post. He said McDonald would be a great pick.

"The whole management style, beginning with open and direct communication, is perfect for the Vermont Republican Party at this time," said Baker.

DAVE GARDNER, who lost the race to Scott, is working behind the scenes to help reorganize the party and is being urged by some to consider the chairman post.

"V" Can Victory?

It's official: There will be only two contested Burlington City Council races on Town Meeting Day.

Republican Councilor **VANCE DODGE** (8 Ward 7) will face Democrat **BOB JENNINGS**. Meanwhile, Progressive Councilor **VANCE BORDOWITZ** (3-Ward 3) will face Democrat **JOHN HENSON** and Independent **BOB HALEY**.

If either **Marcus** or **Jennings** wins, the Democrats would hold an outright majority on the 14-member council.

Question is: Will the newcomers prove irresistible?

Got Al Jazeera?

Cable TV viewers in the United States are getting a decidedly Western view of the turmoil in Egypt.

That is, unless you're a Burlington Telecom subscriber. BT is one of the few cable outlets in the U.S. that offers Al Jazeera English. You can find AJE on Channel 333, tucked between TruTV — formerly Court TV — and FOX Business.

Maybe the situation in Egypt will help boost BT's subscriber base. Then again, the last thing Mayor **Bob Kiss** needs is warring footage of people rioting in the streets, calling for the resignation of an unpopular leader.

Media Notes

The *Barnes-Mortimer Times Argus* is laying off staff and the *Burlington Free Press* still has its mandatory unpaid furloughs. Meanwhile, VTDigger.org is hiring.

Digger-in-Chief **JOHN GALLAGHER** has brought on his first full-time staffer. Josh Larkin will serve as Digger's director of design and technology and will also contribute articles. Larkin and Gallagher worked together at the *Times Argus*, where Gallagher was laid off more than a year ago and Larkin worked as a reporter.

Spawning of second chances, here are two more. More than four years ago, Out in the Mountains ended its 21-year run as Vermont's only free, monthly LGBTQ publication. A new crew of volunteers is now hoping to relaunch the job as an online community newspaper. The nascent site can be found at OITM.org.

In December, Seven Days purchased *KissVT*, the state's only parenting publication. The first issue hit the stands Tuesday with a new logo and design, and all local content. ☐

Don't miss Fall Wednesday for the first "Ten Games" 7 Days in 70:7C2 review/show! Join Tuesday nights during the trip in... (see next page for a preview)

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Why Four Peruvian "Workers" Couldn't Wait to Leave Vermont

BY KEN PICARD



Foto: Ken Picard/Staff Photo

Lovers Ivo Pinillos and she had as chance about getting rich when she signed a contract to spend three months working in a Montpelier cafe in the winter — during her summer vacation. The 28-year-old university student at Free Libre, Peru, said she expected to make enough money to cover her travel expenses, plus maybe a little extra to see the United States.

But Pinillos' experience was anything but a vacation. Her contract, with an out-of-state company that sponsored her visa, guaranteed her at least 40 hours of work each week or about \$1200 each month.

But Pinillos claimed that her Montpelier employer, Sinosistema Café, never lived up to its obligation, and when given her less than half the hours she'd been promised.

Café proprietor Raul Nibolema also guaranteed Pinillos "suitable accommodations." But she found herself among 11 foreign workers living in a five-bedroom, one-bathroom house in Barre City. Though men and women shared the house, Pinillos claimed, there were no doors on the bedrooms, and the bathroom didn't have a lock. She and Nibolema would often show

up, announced in the house and bedrooms.

Pinillos expected to be "hooking" with another woman. She didn't think that meant they'd be sharing one mattress on the floor. In another room, three women shared another single mattress.

"Why am I supposed to sleep in the same bed with this woman? She's a complete stranger to me," Pinillos complained. "So I ended up sleeping on the couch," she said.

Pinillos' allegations were echoed by those of three other Peruvian women interviewed for this story. All were employed by Sinosistema until just last week, when a fellow Peruvian, now a permanent Vermont resident living in Franklin County, "rescued" them from their situation and took them into her home.

The four Peruvians, all university students from Lima on summer break, expressed bitterness, disappointment and anger at the way they'd been treated in Vermont. Each said she paid more than \$3000 for the opportunity to come to the United States under the federal J-1 Summer Work Travel Program, which allows foreign students to work here for as long as four months.

According to a U.S. state department spokesperson, the program has expanded in popularity in recent years, growing from 54,700 participants in 2000 to 130,000 in 2010. The state department doesn't keep track of where the program participants live and work.

Nor does the Vermont Department of Labor monitor how many J-1 visa holders are currently employed in the state — though anecdotal evidence suggests many foreign students are coming to Vermont to work in the state's ski resorts, hotels, cruise ships and other tourism-related businesses.

It doesn't always go well. A recent Associated Press investigation revealed widespread abuses in the J-1 visa program. Lured by the promise of well-paying jobs and the opportunity to live and travel in the United States, many overseas students fork over thousands of dollars to private, third-party brokers to provide them with work and housing, only to find they're signed up for overcrowded living arrangements and dangerous, potentially illegal employment.

The AP investigation discovered that some J-1 visa holders were placed in

strip clubs when they expected to be working in restaurants. Some student workers were paid less than \$1 per hour, while others were forced to sleep in shifts because their housing accommodations were so overcrowded.

Currently, two federal probes are investigating allegations of human trafficking related to J-1 visas.

No one has made such harsh accusations against Nibolema, himself a recent immigrant to the United States. Nibolema came to Vermont from the Republic of Congo with his wife and two children in 2000 and has grown a successful restaurant business, which has been profiled twice by *Seven Days*. He also appeared in the April 11 issue of *Perseus* magazine last year, where his story was linked at \$122,000.

Nibolema, 38, denied virtually all the Peruvian women's allegations against him. He did admit that their full-time

employment arrangement "didn't work out" because of his delays in opening a new café in Montpelier, where he'd expected them to work. That setback also reduced his need for workers in the industrial kitchen he operates in Winooski.

Nibolema claimed that, as soon as he realized there wasn't enough work for the Peruvians, he contacted the agency that sponsored their J-1 visas — American Work Experience of Greenwich, Conn. — and asked that they be reassigned to another employer, or even another state.

"A few of them had already left and went to other states," he asserted, adding that it was his first experience using the J-1 visa program.

The Peruvian women said Nibolema's inexperience with the program is no excuse for the way they were treated. They said he should have worked with their sponsor, AWE, to correct the problems.

"We trusted the company that we were going to work with somebody with experience in this kind of exchange program," said Nieves Prigione, a

20-year-old college student from Lima. "But when we got here, our employer told us it was the first time he'd ever done something like this." Not only were the girls unable to work other jobs — they lacked

Social Security numbers — but they had no transportation in and out of Barre and often resorted to hitchhiking to get to work and back.

Prigione had many of the same complaints as Pinillos. Though her contract clearly specified that she'd get at least 40 hours of work each week, some weeks she spent more than eight hours at Sinosistema. Her last paycheck, dated January 22, was for \$18.20 for a two-week period.

Nibolema wouldn't disclose how much he paid his employees, though his most recent pay stub for the floor Peruvian women indicates a rate of \$8.05 per hour, which compares with

**WE HATE VERMONT.
WHY DID HE BRING US
HERE IF HE DON'T HAVE
WORK FOR EVERYBODY?**

STAFFAN SUÑAS CHIZA

LABOR

Vermont's current minimum wage law. Ndiabena denied he charged the women anything for their accommodations, which he described as "very good," he said he received \$16,000 in new furniture for the house in Barre City, which he owns.

However, copies of the four women's pay stubs, provided to *Seven Days* last week, reveal a \$200 "cash advance" deducted from each one. When asked about the \$200 per-person charges, Ndiabena explained that they covered the cost of utilities, including electricity, cable TV and Internet access.

According to the Vermont Department of Labor, it's illegal for employers to withhold more than \$40 per month from a worker's paycheck to cover housing expenses. An employer may charge more for housing, but it can't be automatically deducted from the wages.

Was \$200 worth the price the women paid? A Barre City fire inspector visited the house in December after one of the residents filed a complaint. According to Barre City Fire Chief Tim Bartholme, the inspector found no major fire-code violations, but did confirm that a lot of people were living there. No citations could be issued, since Barre City has no maximum-occupancy standards for private homes.

Ndiabena admitted that, for a "short time," he had 11 employees living in the house at 39 Buckley Street. However, he denied that the bedrooms locked doors and the bathroom had no lock. Asked whether his tenants were forced to share beds, Ndiabena just laughed.

"They're young girls! They wanted to stay together," he said. "They didn't want me to separate them. They cried!"

Ndiabena's contract with American Work Experience apparently didn't include any oversight of the workmen's housing. An AWE spokesperson wouldn't comment on the situation in Manchester or answer any questions about the company itself. "We've adopted a policy of not talking to reporters anymore," the spokesperson said. The company website describes it as a "fully designed sponsor of 13 cultural exchange programs."

But the performance and compliance chief at the Vermont Department of Labor recently opened an investigation into Sennebogen's labor practices. She wouldn't comment on her findings.

The staff of Sen. Bernie Sanders is also aware of but wouldn't comment

on, the Sennebogen situation, citing it as ongoing "confidential services."

Nicole Thompson, a state department spokesperson, said her office is aware of the epidemic problems with the J-1 visa program and recently adopted an improved "vetting process" for employers who want to participate in it. The department has increased its monitoring of agencies that arrange for J-1 visas, of which there are about 350 nationwide. Thompson said she was aware of any specific complaints about Vermont employers.

**LORENA POLI PINILLOS
FOUND HERSELF AMONG
11 FOREIGN WORKERS
LIVING IN A FIVE-BEDROOM,
ONE-BATHROOM HOUSE
IN BARRE CITY. SHE
CLAIMED THERE
WERE NO DOORS
ON THE BEDROOMS
AND THE BATHROOM
DIDN'T HAVE A LOCK.**

Shortly before press time, the Franklin County Peruvian woman who "rescued" the four young women last week notified *Seven Days* that Ndiabena had purchased four plane tickets so the women could leave Vermont.

"I tried about the money," Ndiabena explained. "I tried to do my best as a businessman. I'm a citizen of the world."

All four Peruvians left the state last weekend, but not before sharing their impressions of the time they spent here.

"We hate Vermont," said Stefany Dacin Cerna, 26, on the others all nodded in agreement. "Why did he bring us here if he didn't have work for everybody?"

"I'd go to other states, but I wouldn't come here again," Paulina added. "It's not just about the money. We're losing our vacations. Now we could be on a beach with our friends and family." ☺

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LOCALmatters

Burlington Cabbies Up in Arms About Proposed Meters

BY ANDY BRONAGE



PHOTO BY ANDY BRONAGE

shorts or exposed midriffs. No washing
pots or "leaking" on the cab. Violators
can already lose their own license for such
offenses. Under the new rules, they could
also face fines of up to \$100.

Queen City cabbies are fuming about
the proposed rules change, threatening
to sue the city or pull out of Burlington
altogether if it goes through. While many
agree the system needs fixing, they view
the city's solution as an "overreach" that
will harm a cabbie industry.

"If the city is so hell-bent that they
can't work with us, we just won't serve
the city of Burlington," director Paul
Ritter, owner of Burlington's largest taxi
company, Berrys Transportation, "We
would take every legal action known to
manhood to fight them."

Burlington City Councilor
Bernie Mahoney-Ramak (D-
West 3) doesn't take taxi rules
very often, but the recently re-
members are very expensive ride from
Newark to the Courtyard Marriott and
back. Under the city's "new system" of
pricing, the six-block trip should have
cost her \$6 or \$7. The cabbie charged
her \$14.

The situation hasn't changed much
over the years. In 2004, a *Seven Days* in-
vestigation documented what Burlington
taxi rules have known for years: The
same system is routinely ignored and un-
enforced, meaning a cab fare from Point
A to Point B can cost almost anything,
depending on who's driving.

What's new is the city's response. A
total rewrite of the taxi regulations that
would regulate the
same system with
new rules. Draft regu-
lations headed to the
Burlington City
Council this month.

would also subject taxi drivers to random
drug tests and physicals, and crack
down on bad habits that city officials say
they've tolerated for far too long: cab drivers
smoking, watching porn, sleeping in parked
taxis and drinking sloppily, for example.

Mahoney-Ramak, who also sits on the
city's Taxi Licensing Board, says the new
regulations come in response to "cabbie
complaints" — often from cabbie them-
selves — about price gouging, a glut of taxis
on city streets, offensive behavior and a
lack of enforcement of the existing rules.

"Right now it's a little bit like the Wild
West out there," says Mahoney-Ramak,
who says the goal is to create "very consis-
tent standards for drivers."

The cabbies, those "consistent stan-
dards" would mean no cellphones or
"exaggerated dress" such as exposed but-
toms or exposed midriffs.

Ritter admits the new system is widely
abused, but he opposes anything to meters
because, he claims, it would be more ex-
pensive for his customers. Under the new
system, rides within Burlington now cost
\$6.50 to \$16.50, depending on the distance.
The 10-page draft taxi rules make no men-
tion of what Burlington meter rules would
be. Ritter would continue to be run by the city
council, with adjustments pegged to federal
transportation rates set by the U.S. Bureau of
Labor Statistics. Any time gas prices rise 25
percent in a six-month period, a two-thirds
majority of the city council — at a petitioner's
request — could adjust meter rates.

Today taxes that work from Burlington
International
Airport are al-
ready required to
be equipped with
meters. From
KTV are \$150 for
the first two miles,
plus \$2.25 per mile for the next eight miles
and \$2.30 for every mile after that. The
metered return rate usually works out to
be more expensive than the metered rate
that brought you to the place.

At the January public hearing, one
cabbie suggested the city meter rates be
set at \$5 for the first mile and 40 cents for
each additional quarter mile. "Anything
less will result in an unsafe taxi fare," the
cabbie said, warning taxi drivers would
earn enough to maintain their vehicles
properly.

Today some pricing only applies to
rides that begin and end in Burlington.
Customers who start or end their trips
elsewhere are free to negotiate prices with
cabbies. That's created a sort of free-mar-
ket system for cab fares that taxi meters
would do away with. Under the new regu-

TRANSPORTATION

any city that goes through Burlington must run on the meter rate, taking away a cab owner's ability to haggle.

Peddly Jackson, an independent cab owner, resented the city pass that means that the vast majority of cab business comes from mandated pick-ups, which have gone from very few complaints about price gouging. Almost all the problems are coming from hiked cabs, he said, so if the city wants to require meters, it should do so only for hiked ride.

Not every cabbie in Burlington opposes the meters. Charles Herrick, the co-owner of Green Cab Vt, a fleet of five alternative-fuel Toyotas, doesn't agree with every proposed rule change, but says the meters would be a huge improvement over the zone system. Right now, customers hailing cabs can't reliably predict how much cab rides will cost, he says.

"It's right for customers to have a fair representation of the cost of a ride," Herrick says.

Rohrer argues that the city should better enforce the regulations if it has before enacting new ones, even while admitting that he has trouble keeping his own drivers in line. Rohrer tells Seven Days that the state recently threatened to fine his company \$10,000 because drivers have been caught smoking in their cabs. "I can't resist them in a new bubble. I can tell them they're not going to smoke, but it's a little harder and then done," Rohrer says.

Burlington police have jurisdiction over taxis, but Mulviheny-Stanak admits it's not the department's top priority. To address that, the new regulations would empower a "taxi advisory group" made up of drivers, consumers and industry reps to enforce the ordinance. Mulviheny-Stanak likes it to a "neighborhood watch."

"They'd be empowered to go up to a taxi driver, ask for their license, do a quick inspection to see if they're complying with the new ordinance," she explains. "They won't have the ability to issue tickets, but they can initiate a complaint process which would trigger an investigation or hearing to resolve the situation."

Rohrer's beef with the current state of Burlington's cab industry goes beyond what's addressed by the regulations. His complaint of refuge too drivers who don't speak English and receive assistance from recruitment programs covered pay for their cab and taxi license.

"You've got to be able to speak English, and you've got to know where you're going," Rohrer says, adding that when the rule is on, "They understand the money

They understand that, but they don't understand anything else."

Too many taxis is another common complaint heard by the city, and Mulviheny-Stanak says the new regulations would "shrink" mean fewer licensed cabs, in part because new drug and health screenings would disqualify some applicants. However, the ordinance she regulates wouldn't cap the number of licenses given out, or institute a New York City-style medallion system. At present, there are 161 taxi drivers licensed to serve Burlington and Burlington International Airport.

Cabbies have complained about the proposed drug tests and questioned whether randomly screening private employees is even constitutional. Assistant

City Attorney Nikki Poller believes the city is on firm legal ground and notes that it's not owners and drivers themselves who often complain to the city about other cabbies' drug habits.

"We had such a huge number of people [with convictions for] possession and sale, the city would be kind of reticent in not trying to address it," says Poller. "When you give someone a license, you give the impression the city is saying this person's OK to drive around."

Another base of contention — the requirement of licensed physicians — is meant to weed out drivers with medical conditions, from mobility issues to vision problems, that would make them unsafe for licensing, Poller says.

"We have one person with arthritis who could barely breathe, and we're going, 'Are you serious?'" Poller recalls. "But that you're trying to be mean or anything. But if this person can't breathe, should we put them in a taxi with someone? We want to make sure that whatever condition you have is properly treated."

All those extra tests would jack up the annual taxi license fee — to around \$200 instead of the current \$60, according to Poller.

For his part, Rohrer is resigned to the city council approving the new regulations, and is instead intent on step-arming Burlington as a result. The city, he notes, represents a mere 10 percent of Vermont's business.

"When the snowstorm comes the next time, and people are calling for a cab, and there's none out there," Rohrer says, "well, thank your city fathers." ☐

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PROPOSED GUN LAW IS UNEFFECTIVE

My sincere sympathies to the families of the passengers who took their own lives ("Morning Line," January 30). It is already illegal for anyone under 18 to possess a firearm without parental consent. It is already illegal to provide anyone under 18 with a firearm without parental consent. And it's already illegal for anyone to possess a firearm in a school building or on a bus. (18 V.S.A. sections 4008, 4009 and 400A, respectively.)

A new law requiring that each owner lock up his or her firearms is virtually unenforceable and won't prevent any future tragedies.

Laws merely provide a framework for prosecution after the event.

The most appropriate shrine to the memories of those young men is to improve the mental-health and suicide prevention programs in our schools.

Paul Brown
JANUARY 30

MEDIA PROPAGATES VIOLENCE

Juliah Lerner's "Pull the Plug" column "All Against A?" (January 29), offers a valuable perspective on the ideological and cultural roots of American violence, with one significant omission.

In a greatly self-serving manner, she denies the culpability of the media in feeding, propagating or encouraging social violence. Given that we are no longer a

local, and culture, in which information is passed primarily by word of mouth, none of the right-wing messages she decries would have been heard without some form of print or screen or digital media to disseminate them.

This makes not only the authors of sensational words liable for the real-world effects of language, but perhaps even more so the readers which allow those words a wide audience without, at least, a conscientious editorial rebuke.

After-the-fact armchair postmortems offer little more than a sap to blood already on the ground.

Robert Rosenzweig
AUGUST

FLETCHER ALLEN RESPONSES

The article "Fletcher Allen Taps the Chorus in Death by Dyalysis" (January 19) was a misrepresentation of complex data, and in one instance a wrong characterization of a heart surgery statistic.

The headline implies that mortality data indicate the deaths of patients treated at Fletcher Allen's dialysis units were related to inferior dialysis care, with resulting high mortality. The article gave the public the wrong impression, and did a disservice to our dialysis centers and the patients they treat.

There are two issues that need to be addressed in considering dialysis care. One is the use of the appropri-

ateness tool to compare outcomes among outpatient dialysis facilities (the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS does not collect inpatient dialysis data). The second relates to the structure of Fletcher Allen's dialysis service.

First, the percentage of deaths cannot be meaningfully compared as was done here. This is because the patient characteristics at one unit may be very different from those at another unit. If one unit has sicker patients, it may have sicker deaths. To compare outcomes, a correction must be made for health differences (known as risk) among patients. The risk-adjusted death rate describing dialysis facility outcomes is the measure that CMS uses to compare dialysis facilities, not the crude percentage rates that appeared in the article.



facility. The outpatient dialysis service at the Medical Center Campus Dialysis unit is unusual in that this choice is shared.

When outpatients become too sick to be treated in an ambulatory unit, the hospital outpatient unit, which has more resources because it also treats very sick inpatients, accepts that patient. There is no problem for analyzing outcomes at a facility that deliberately accepts outpatients whose dialysis care is challenging.

There's another problem with the article in paragraph one, which states "Researcher claims it supported by another study. Last year's report by the Northern New England Cardiovascular Disease Study Group revealed 5.1

percent of ESRD's cardiac patients die of postoperative renal failure, the regional average is 3.8 percent."

This is false. The statistic refers to the percentage of patients who experienced postoperative renal failure or renal insufficiency among the most recent 500 cases in the end of June 2010, where the surgery was only for coronary bypass grafts. It is not a measure of mortality. It is not a measure of those who required dialysis—many died. It is not a measure of all cardiac patients, but a subset of certain heart surgery patients.

Regarding concerns stated in the article about staff and skill levels: The commitment by Providence Medical

Center to have existing clinical staff and maintain the current staffing levels is stated in the signed letter of intent, as is the commitment to our maintaining medical direction at those units. The same commitments will be included in the completed contract.

Fletcher Allen chose Providence, in part, because the organization is comfortable with Providence's commitment to maintaining the quality of care Fletcher Allen provides for its patients.

Mitigating stories such as this unnecessarily upset patients and their families, and impact health care providers without reason.

John Brunstedt MD
BURLINGTON

Brunstedt is chief medical officer at Fletcher Allen Medical Center.

Editor's response: Last week's *News* story acknowledged the error related to the New England cardiac bypass surgery. As to the other points raised by Dr. Brunstedt, *News* stands by its reporting. The data cited in the article have already been adjusted for comorbidities, as well as other patient characteristics, to allow size-by-size comparison.

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The Flynn Salvages a *Godot* Presentation — on Screen

BY PAMELA POLSTON

Flynn Center patrons who thought tickets to *Waiting for Godot* might have thought the wait was almost over: The Christopher McElroy production, set in post-Katrina New Orleans and performed by African American actors, was scheduled for this Saturday, February 5. Instead, the show has been canceled.

The reason? The Samuel Beckett estate suddenly pulled the rights to the play, according to Flynn artistic director **MIKE MALINA**. "We found out a week ago, and it was a startling development, because the same company got the rights a year ago to perform the play," he says. Indeed, last year's tour included stops at the Hopkins Center at Dartmouth College and at Middlebury College. "Apparently the increased publicity the piece has gotten over the year drew the attention of one of the [Beckett] family members, and he made the decision they didn't want the specifics of *Godot*

associated with New Orleans," Malina explains.

Which is puzzling, because what better expression unscripted expectations than the citizens of the Crescent City waiting for help after the devastating hurricane and flooding? Remember *FEDRA*? Why wouldn't the family at the Irish dramatist applaud such a poignant and riveting update of the 1958 play? The production was nominated for a 2000 Elliot Norton Award for its presentation at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, and the Museum of Modern Art has acquired the archives from the site-specific production, they're on view through September 12, if you happen to be heading to New York City.

McElroy's original conception is exactly what Flynn goes will be able to see, as it turns out. "What we're replacing without screen is the film version of the New Orleans act," says Malina. That would be the one staged as a rooftop in the city's Lower Ninth Ward, and is a



Waiting for Godot

20-foot pool of water. The piece weaves Beckett's words with the rhythms of hip-hop and speech patterns of African Americans living in New Orleans. McElroy, a New York-based producer and director whom Malina calls "a really innovative force in theater," will be asked to discuss the work, political activism and the difficulty of getting the rights to the play — and, one imagines, the ease of losing them.

Though the Flynn is reinsubscribing

ticket holders for *Godot*, patrons may want to come around on Saturday night for the unique opportunity to witness the New Orleans play — first — on the theater's new stage-to-railing movie screen, and here in audience with the director. Actor **J. Kyle Muzzey**, who played Estragon (*Godot*) in *Godot*, is coming, as well.

In addition to the Saturday night presentation, Malina and McElroy are conducting a master acting workshop

Local Doc Takes on Lake Pollution — and Gets Some Flack

BY MEREDITH HARRISON

The **WILSON THEATRE** in St. Albans usually shows Hollywood fare. But on Monday night, it hosted a lively debate inspired by a screening of the local documentary *Bloom: The Fight of Lake Champlain*.

"It was packed — about 150 people," says **RYAN GARDIGINO**, who wrote, produced and directed the film. He says he noticed "a few legislative raps" in the audience, along with municipal representatives and lakeside homeowners.

Perhaps most vocal, though, were the farmers. The "blame" of the documentary's title is the toxic blue-green algae, caused by phosphorus, that clogs lake beaches and kills fish. The film presents agricultural fertilizer runoff as one major source of that pollution. The other two are urban stormwater and spring water from treatment plants.

Some of the film's interviewees suggest that politicians aren't addressing lake pollution because agriculture has sacred cow status — so to speak — in Vermont. "Listen to any politician [when running for office]," says **ROBERTA HALL**, assistant principal of Shelburne Free Academy in St. Albans. "They will talk about

saving the farms... They are playing on the myth of dairy in Vermont." Another interviewee says tourism and ag are contributing much to the state's economy.

Naturally, farmers at the screening had something to say about that. "I took an awful from people," says Gardigino. "[Farmers] take it personally. They feel like they're criticizing their lifestyle." But overall, he says, the debate was balanced and had a "very civilized" tone, meeting well.

Among the attendees was **BONNIE SANVILLE**, chair of the Farmer's Sustainable Alliance, whose members say they're already working to clean up its act. Rutville appears in the film too, presenting a farmer's perspective. "It's pretty hard to get motivated to start looking at a potential water-quality issue," he says. "When you can't even feed your kids."

It's no surprise, says Gardigino, that the agriculture section of the 20-minute film has provoked the most controversy. "No one has a personal connection to stormwater or to a wastewater-treatment system."

But Gardigino and executive

producer **JOE D. BRICKMAN**, a University of Vermont professor and managing director of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, say they don't make Blaine to point a finger at farmers. It's the first in a planned four-episode series on the lake problem, with the next three focusing on solutions.

Gardigino creates programs for **VERMONT PROBLETSOLVING** where he won a regional Emmy for the series "Eating Science." In the course of his work, he met ecology professor Brickman and **AMY WOOD**. Together with Ben Falk of Whole Systems Design, they formed the nonprofit production company **WATER BLISS SCHEMATA** to "tell stories about sustainable solutions and have them fact based in science," says Gardigino. Then they approached the Shelburne-based **LIGHTHOUSE FOUNDATION** for funding.

"The idea of focusing on lake



FILM

pollution came from the foundation," says Gardigino. But Brickman says the topic was already "near and dear to my heart. Since my time in Vermont, it just seems like this is an issue that's been highly politicized, and we haven't got a whole

lot of traction on it."

With a \$35,000 budget, says Brickman, the team shot Blaine over three months starting last September. Veteran character actor Chris Cooper, who won an Oscar for his role in *Adaptation*, did the voiceover narration.

The film alternates between talking-head interviews and deceptively pretty shots of the natural lake. Some, taken from the air, reveal the bright green "blooms" of algae spreading like scars along the shores.

To comply with the Clean Water Act, Vermont must set a target for the "total

in the afternoon, focusing on the Grotowski technique, started after the Polish mid-century progenitor of experimental theater Jerzy Grotowski. Malina, though disappointed the touring show won't be staged at the Flynn, is rolling with the punches. The costs of flying the production to

WHAT BETTER EXPRESSES UNREQUITTED EXPECTATIONS THAN THE CITIZENS OF THE CRESCENT CITY WAITING FOR HELP?

Burlington, staffing the theater and "pre-selling" the film and workshop are "the cost of doing business," he notes philosophically. "Things happen sometimes."

At least a show has been salvaged for the Grotodap, even if it's not the scheduled one and will be offered at a loss to the Flynn. Earlier last month, a show

simply evaporated due to visa problems. Cape Verdean singer Carmen Costa was booked for a January 14 show in the Flynnspace but was unable to enter the country "It had nothing to do with us," Malina explains. "The agent and manager of Costa, who living in many international artists and have a great deal of experience with this, paid the overseas \$1000 expediting fee to rush it. And still [the visa] did not come."

Malina acknowledges that visas have been difficult over the last decade, but says there are ongoing efforts aimed at legislation "to try to make it easier."

Let's hope it won't be like waiting for Grotodap.

Either version of history, for Grotodap, is a long-term project by Christopher Malina. History Workshop, Burlington, Saturday February 3, 8 p.m. Free, general seating. Master seating class with Malina and J. Kyle McIntyre in the Central Church Studio, Flynn Center 12 p.m. \$25. To register call 532-4566 ext. 4, 5 or online.

mainstream daily food" of phosphorus the lake can sustain. In the film, **JAM** **SESSIONS**, director of the Agency of Natural Resources' Center for Clean and Clear, notes how far we are from having that target.

IT'S PRETTY HARD TO GET MOTIVATED TO START LOOKING AT A POTENTIAL WATER-QUALITY ISSUE WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN FEED YOUR KIDS.

RODER RAINVILLE, FARMER'S WATERSHED ALLIANCE

The Environmental Protection Agency agrees. On January 24, the EPA announced that it is withdrawing its approval of Vermont's 2003 water quality plan for Lake Champlain. "EPA intends to work closely and collaboratively with the State to develop a new plan for reductions in phosphorus from sources in Vermont," the feds' statement reads.

What will that "new plan" entail? Gaudinso doesn't know. But he thinks,

large scale changes in agricultural thinking and practices would help. "We learned a long time ago that monoculture doesn't work." Urban dwellers, he says, can't let themselves off the hook for lake pollution, given the role of sewerwater. "You can be part of the solution by creating a mini garden, creating a backyard garden."

Both **SESSIONS** emphasize their interest in finding solutions — Erickson says he hopes to compile the next, more detailed, episode about agricultural runoff with a design theme. The goal, he says, is to "see if we can figure out where there is some general consensus about Vermont principles and the future of agriculture in Vermont, and where there is significant disagreement... We didn't hear a whole bunch about the lake during the [2003] campaign, so we're hoping this film can put the lake back on the agenda." ☐

Eleven screens on Monday March 25 at 7 p.m. of the D&L Live Aquarium and adjacent Center in Burlington. Followed by a panel discussion and on Tuesday March 26 at 8 p.m. at the Newbury Association in Montpelier as part of the Green Mountain Film Festival. Screened by Vermonters: www.vermonters.com

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STATEofTHEarts

High School Pianist Takes the Stage With Vermont Philharmonic

BY AMY LILLY



Wang is Wang

THE VERMONT PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA's concert this week includes a Chinese overture, a Beethoven Mass — and 16-year-old **WANG HAO** on piano in Schubert's *Impromptu in B-flat Major*. Having won the VPO's Jen Lawrence Memorial Student Music Scholarship Competition for his performance of the piece, the South Burlington High School junior must now repeat it, this time backed by a full orchestra.

No sweat: Wang has played piano since the age of 6. He is also captain of his school's debate team, math league and Scholastic Bowl, a "Jeopardy!" type competition for high school teams. His parents are from Xian, China.

Another notable product of "Tiger mothering," it is Amy Chua's recent bestseller: an extreme Chinese parenting, *Battle Hymns of the Tiger Mother*. Actually, no. Her from being pushed to take up piano, Wang recalls, "I always knew I wanted to play. I haven't always wanted to practice," the friendly, relaxed teen adds with a laugh. He "should" practice an hour a day, he admits, but "it's not anywhere near that on the weekdays" due to his school activities.

Wang judges himself "not good enough to go to conservatory" — but is interested in pursuing finance or law — but that assessment proves doubtful when he sits down at his family's Kawai 4-foot grand and rouses off the opening bars of "Impromptu." Wang's movement is almost balletic, which lends his playing an immediate beauty. Both are of a piece with the room, which is precisely

arranged with curved jade sculpture and rosewood chairs upholstered in shimmering Chinese fabrics. A stringed instrument called a guqin occupies another corner. Wang has played it since fourth grade, when his father, an economics professor at the University of Vermont, took the family to live in China for a year on a Fulbright Fellowship.

"He could be teaching for a conservatory," affirms Wang's piano teacher, **PAUL ORTEL**, "but his priorities are really set. Piano for him is an obsession." Nevertheless, Ortel adds, "Hao is a very natural and joyous, physical approach to playing."

A student and UVM affiliate artist, Ortel has taught two former Burlington winners, including 2009 winner **SARAH ANTHONY**, now a student at the New England Conservatory and a member of the Burlington Ensemble.

Ortel, whose private students are typically advanced high schoolers, notes that 16 of his current 15 are Chinese. He thinks author Chua may be "talking about a real phenomenon," but he considers Wang to be in a class by himself. "The thing about him is that he's totally open to anything," Ortel says. "He has total engagement of classical music. He's just a really lovely person."

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Wang seems nervous about his first appearance

with an orchestra. It's the music that interests him, not his playing. For eight months, he explains, he practiced and then performed "Impromptu" for the competition with Ortel accompanying him on a second piano. Now he's been to two of four scheduled rehearsals with the Philharmonic. "It sounds so much better with an orchestra," Wang exclaims. "The dominant solos — cello, trumpet — you get to hear it!" ☺

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Dear Cecil:
OK, so what's up with this
Eiffel Tower? I mean, what is
it, actually?
—Snowboardswerty

A shallow individual might venture that it's a tower named after a guy called Eiffel. (I don't mean to give short shrift to the possibility of a Ms. Eiffel, but female tower builders weren't common in 19th-century France.) And, in fact, the genius master behind the Eiffel Tower was the French structural engineer Gustave Eiffel, who also designed the interior framework for the Statue of Liberty.

Nonetheless, Swerty, I join you in believing that an answer lies in important aspects of the subject unexplored. Popular reference works are no help. For example, if you turn to Wikipedia, we learn "The tower was built as the entrance arch to the 1889 World's Fair" or, to the French in their parochial way preferred to express it, *l'Exposition universelle de 1889*. The Eiffel Tower stands at one end of the Champs de Mars, a large green space in central Paris commonly used for such public spectacles. Cross the Seine, perambulate respectfully beneath the tower, and there you are.

But, come on. The Eiffel



Tower is 284 meters tall (including antennas mounted on top, see below), which we husband American think is no 3000 feet. The structure consists of 18,038 pieces of iron, painstakingly fabricated and assembled over a two-year period. It cost nearly 8 million francs, worth something like \$40 million U.S. today. In an era of trillion-dollar deficits, I suppose that's not so much. However, it's more than paid off to pay for a front gate.

Granted, for a world's fair you want something nice. No one as a gang to travel from the province of France, to say nothing of a fair for reaches of the

Earth, to see an entrance arch that might have been bought on sale at Menards. Still, grand is one thing, extravagant is another. The reigning tallest structure in the world at the time, the Washington Monument, was a mere 169 meters (555 feet) in height, and as of 1890 the tallest commercial building — meaning one you could work or live in — was the New York World Building, at a puny 94 meters (309 feet).

A more economical people than the French, therefore, might have said, if we were to erect a tower of 300 meters rather than 284 paces, we'd accomplish our primary objective — having an entrance arch securing our place in the record books and dazzling the natives — while nonetheless leaving

ourselves a sizable sum that we might gradually invest in treasury bonds.

But they didn't. Eiffel's pitch for the project was specifically that he could build a 300-meter tower, and the expo planners bought it. Postwar, the Eiffel Tower arguably holds the record for ratio of grandiosity to usefulness of any structure in the world. (Some will say the Statue of Liberty comes close, but let's remember who dreamed that up.)

This is a matter worth pondering. People have been building tall structures since the days of Babylon — ready for the glory, of course, but usually with some ostensible higher purpose in mind. Temples and cathedrals celebrate the divine; the pyramids are tombs; the Washington Monument commemorates the first U.S. president. The tallest building in the world at the moment, the 160-story Burj Khalifa in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, is 818 meters tall (2717 feet). One suspects this is somewhat longer than was demanded by the local real estate market, but the fact remains that the Burj Khalifa is a building containing habitable space.

Not as the Eiffel Tower — at least not to my great extent. It was vastly overbuilt to close to pure form. They'd not to say it was a sublime financial. The tower has an observation deck,

restaurants, a meeting space, a souvenir shop and so on, all of which charge appropriately hefty rates. The tower earned back most of its construction cost during the 1889 exhibition, and is a moneymaker from the city of Paris and the project finished comfortably in the black.

However, business dropped off after the fair closed. The original plan was to demolish the tower after 20 years; it survived primarily because enterprising parties found profitable uses for it. First is the tower, gazing at the tower's famous silhouette, who hasn't thought, This would be the perfect spot to park my druggie. In reality, however, tall structures make notoriously bad airport airside, due to baffling winds. The tower did serve as an airport pylons on at least one occasion, when aviation pioneer Alberto Santos-Dumont rounded it during a prize-winning flight in 1900.

The salvation of the Eiffel Tower proved to be in communications. An antenna for wireless telegraphy was added in 1905, later commercial radio and TV antennas were installed. These paid the tower's utility location took off after World War II. Today the Eiffel Tower is said to draw more visitors than any other free-charging structure on Earth, admirably serving the role for which it was built. Which is what, you ask? Don't be dull! It's an advertisement for France. ☺

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**WHISKEY
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We just had to ask...

What's with all the crows in Burlington?

BY KEVIN J. KELLEY

Twitter has recently been all about a seeming uptick in Burlington's crow population. Is there actually an ornithologist's term for "eruption" of crows in the Queen City this winter?

Probably not, veteran wildlife watchers

Crows are always more numerous in urban areas in winter than in summer, notes Carol Winkler, a zoologist and founder of the Vermont Wildlife Rescue Association. "Some birds don't migrate because they can't."

make a living here," she says.

"It's normal for moose to roost in Buckingham in winter," adds Craig Newman, a wildlife rehabilitator and director of Outreach for North Stroudshap. "I've seen hundreds of them in the trees on First Night."

It's not like crows are tracking all those "lost" rings, but they do enjoy the amenities Burlington offers — especially food, water and shelter.

Winfeld points out that "food gets harder to find than time of year, and humans are a great source of food for adaptable, intelligent creature-like crows." We can be relied on to provide "road kill, garbage and bird feeders," she says.

Corrion is a crow's favorite dish, Winfield notes, but adds, "They'll eat anything: mice, fruit, vegetables, French fries." That probably explains the noisy scene at Intervale Campsite, where hundreds of crows and magpies squawk hysterically while circling mounds of decomposing organic matter.

The comparative scarcity of predators is another big reason why crows prefer urban life, Newman notes. There aren't nearly as many great horned owls — Crow Entry No. 1 — on the Church Street Marketplace as in, say, the Green Mountain Audubon Center in Huntington. And it's wise for crows to stay well away from owls these days, because... owls are pretty hungry now, too." *Wendy M. Lewis*

Even if a starving predator should be prowling the intervals, crows know there's safety in numbers, she continues. "If you're

out on your own, and an evil does come along, you're history," Winfield says. "You want to wedge your way into the middle of the flock, not be out on the edges."

Burlington is also a warmer place, literally, than the 'burbs. "It's 5 to 10 degrees warmer near the waterfront before the head lake breeze," Newman notes.

Despite all these comforts of civilization, crows, like other wild animals, don't really like to hang out around humans, Winfield adds. "Crows actually get just a fraction of their sustenance from bird feeders," she notes. So, once summer comes and rural life gets easier, more crows are seen here.

The comparative harshness of the current winter may be forcing more crows than usual to come to towns, both the ornithologists suggest. They also point to the possibility of a baby boom among local crows this past spring. But neither Newman nor Winfield reports hearing as harrowing tales about any crow eruptions in Burlington or elsewhere in Vermont.

Those dwelling so casually about crowds of crows congregating downtown and in the neighborhoods "might be bystanders unconcerned to what's a regular occurrence," Wisfield says. She recalls recent annual sittings here with amazement of all the crows in their neighborhood. "They were in cl-

neighborhood before you went," Winfield says she informs the new owners.

Crows do attract attention, she adds — "They're big and they're noisy." Someone just becoming aware of Vermont's fauna might first *glance* at crows. No wonder, says, because "they're the most common wild species of animal that people encounter."

Maybe, too, proposes Mark LaBarre, conservation biologist and lead staffer for *Antelope* Vermont, the phenomenon has more to do with social media than with *Garrus leucophrys* (the American crow) itself. "What once becomes a widely circulated rumor would in the past have stopped with just a couple of people," LaBarre says.

It's true that crows creep out some humans. They're associated in legends with literature with death and despair (think of Poe's poems about the crow's close cousin, "The Raven"). Consider also that, while scientists speak of a "flock" of crows, folklorists refer to a crow gathering as a "murder."

Their fondness for dead meat may largely account for this linkage in the popular imagination, so may crows' discomfiting call and their face-wal phantoms.

Whatever their sex, crows are clearly unwelcome in Watertown, N.Y., where, an instant-to-God eruption does seem to have occurred. The upstate city has been exploding fireworks and blaring recordings of crow distress calls in an effort to shoo away the estimated 15,000 of them roosting in Watertown's streets.

Eruptions have also been reported in Syracuse, Utica and Mount Auburn, NY. The last locale has gone so far as to stage a coin-operated contest.

Newman doesn't endorse such extreme measures, but he acknowledges that poop can be a problem. "All these crows up in the trees can play a lot of games on can be how," he observes. "It's pretty annoying." ☺



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Mutual Aid?

By now, most readers of *Seven Days* must know that the barn at Pete's Greens in Craftsbury burned to the ground on the foggy night of January 12, taking with it all the farm's packing and storage equipment, and a quarter-million dollars' worth of produce and meat. The barn itself was insured for only three-quarters of its value, the food sat at all. At least for the moment, Pete Johnson has lost the farm.

Support from all over Vermont materialized immediately, from the pag of small-change donations on the check-out counter at Buffalo Mountain Go up to the \$10 for the Barn online auction that last week raised almost \$65,000 on hundreds of contributed products and services, among them a handspun alpaca hat from Green Mountain Farm, a freshly exonerated from Mad River Valley Counseling and a lobster dinner from Stone Seafood. The solidarity—and the breadth—of Vermont's small-business community is impressive to behold.

In a commentary on Vermont Public Radio, food writer Marianne Calkins asked whether the absence of Pete's Greens would make a difference in the bigger scheme of things. "Does it really matter," she asked, "that patrons of high-end restaurants won't be dining on Johnson's breads from this season? Or that members of his CSA will have to commute without deliveries of citrus-free butter?"

She answered her questions with a hearty no, cataloging the trickle-down effects of the farm's loss: local business, the Good & Beautiful and inconvertible contributions. \$106,000 of food purchased each winter from other local producers for the CSA; dozens of Vermont restaurants whose reputations are built on serving local organic foods; 15,000 pounds of produce donated annually to the Vermont Food Bank; 11 winterhouse employees whose Calkins assumed would be rehired.

Pete's Greens is a major player in the local economy, or a certain gratified segment thereof, and that economy as buoyant until the enterprise sends up snow showers and a reborn.

I, too, extend my fervent wishes to Johnson for a quick recovery. After all, he isn't only a respected leader of Vermont's local-foods agriculture movement. He's a neighbor and a member of a well-known and beloved family in these parts. His brother, Andrew, an Olympic Nordic skier, and sister, landscape architect and floral designer Daniela, are just as ambitious, industrious and charming. The community mourned the too-early death of their mother, Nancy, not long ago.

It is hard to separate Pete's Greens from John Johnson himself. That's a good thing about local business. It has a face, someone to be held accountable—or to help in an emergency. That personal connection also makes it easier to forgive a mistake, even if it might affect your own livelihood, and understand one to the tune of several hundred thousand dollars in one big business blunder. After all, Pete's Greens is no ConAgra, but neither is it a struggling family farm. The food community is showing admirable goodwill.

It was in the light of these events—the burning barn, the glowing response—that I watched with dismay as first other Pete, Vermont's new Democratic Gov. Shumlin, outlined his proposed state budget last week. The governor's principal plan for filling the \$170 million budget gap is to tax the splurge: locked off the state-funded agencies that serve the mentally ill, the elderly and others in need, let's also shutting the state's commitment to local public schools.

Not like Pete Johnson's catastrophe, these losses hit into the root of the economy and leave individuals bearing. Service industries will put the most vulnerable out in the cold, and nonprofits will have to pick up the pieces. School boards will choose between laying off staff and hardening their bones with higher property taxes. Government workers will have less to spend downtown—for instance, on meals at local-foods restaurants. They're already agreed to a two-pay, 1 percent wage cut.

You might say all this pain results not so much from what Shumlin is doing

as from what he isn't doing, and which he promised not to do during his campaign, raise taxes. He's holding to this despite an unfathomable source of revenue revealed by Public Assets Institute a few days before the budget address: a \$390 million windfall for the state's wealth-tax 5 percent, thanks to Washington's extension of the Bush tax cuts. According to PAI president Fred Cifra (full disclosure: my democratic partner), "Those who are prospering the most in the current economy could close the state's entire budget gap, and still pay less in state and federal income taxes than they would have if the Bush tax cuts had expired as scheduled." They'd have a few bucks left over to buy their season old jeans, too.

Shumlin isn't inarguably "in keeping with the long tradition of frugality and common sense that is the hallmark of Vermonters."

Well, yes and no. Vermonters, as evidenced by the Pete's Greens story, also have a long tradition of mutual aid.

I don't know what Shumlin's own deepest values are, but, only his budget reflects Vermonters' changing beliefs and feelings. The change didn't just happen this year or last, it's been pushed for several decades by antigovernment rhetoric from the right.

Coupled with the fact government has been catching up the leaders switched on business. A majority of Americans now believe that the private sector creates wealth and the public sector squanders it. With this formula in voters' heads, politicians are loath to tax anyone, and they're especially disinclined to disinvest business or the people who benefit most from their success. This is an oversimplification, but when politicians have to make "the tough choices," the formula the state is to business, the less frugally it must be to the rest of us, taxpayers and service users all.

The recently published Pulse of Vermont survey, which is taken every five years by the Vermont Business Roundtable, provides some indicators of these changing values and loyalties. Respondents show declining trust in Montpelier and a weakening support for public schools, they are wiser of their

SADLY, SHUMLIN'S BUDGET REFLECTS

VERMONTERS' CHANGING BELIEFS AND FEELINGS.

their neighbors, and feel more strongly that they need to look out for themselves and their families than Governor people are the least trusting. They should be.

They've been screwed. The sorry part is that they see the government and other less-fortunate people as their screwers.

The survey uncovered some other interesting attitudes. Asked what parts of life in Vermont they felt were most threatened, for the first time respondents put the safety of the food supply and family farms and local agriculture at the top of the list, educational opportunity fell way down.

Why these changes of heart, these new worries? For one, as I've said, since the last survey was taken five years ago, Vermonters have listened more to their previous governors blaming greedy teachers and state workers for the mess the state is in. Meanwhile, farmers have gained credit. With more organic farms, more food consciousness and more farmers markets, people have gotten to know and like their local growers. And — as so small thing — the supervisors have been doing some brilliant marketing.

The survey respondents who "had the highest confidence in many of the state's central institutions" were the "most secure financially." They were also the "most committed to life in Vermont." I have a feeling these people make up the lion's share of donors to Peter's Gospel. Who but an extremely financially secure person could afford a \$200 bowl of onion soup at Ellen of the Wood to benefit a hare?

I'm not suggesting that local agriculture is a lottery and public schools a

security. And I'm not saying that nonprofit clinics should be supported and private enterprises left on their own when disaster strikes. Plus, Johnson

is important to Vermont's economy and its community life. But equally important is the kindergarten teacher and the town clerk and the guy who plows the roads. Equally important are the workers who don't own companies and the nonprofits that, beyond fulfilling their missions, provide good jobs.

No doubt, it feels better to grow voluntarily to the handsome fellow who grows your spinach than to be compelled to pay taxes to benefit a sorry runaway teen or buy a box of Xerox paper for some bureaucratic office. But government provides natural aid, too. And when the state cuts 34 of services for every dollar it raises in revenue — Vermont's record in recent years, according to IMF — that's not very natural.

I've been thinking of making lapel pins that say "Blame My Taxes." I write these financially secure folks to show their commitment to Vermont by joining me in putting one on. And the lapel pin should enter the courage to take our advice.

Please, keep helping the Pete Johnsons when their backs turn down. But Vermont and the nation are burning, too, and it's time we all carried water to put the fire out. ☺

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Stoked About Stogies

A Vermont vendor puts a hand-rolled twist on classic wedding favors

BY KEN PICARD



COURTESY: HERRICK

Elizabeth Herrick says her presence at wedding receptions comes as a surprise to guests—especially when they discover she's the one hand-rolling their cigars.

"It's funny, because they're usually not expecting me," says Herrick, owner of the Vermont Cigar Factory. "They're expecting someone in a tuxedo with a mustache... But they still expect me to know what I'm doing."

That she does. Despite her company's headlined merlot-sounding name, Herrick is the Vermont Cigar Factory's sole manufacturer, or cigar roller. Since 2005, she's been hiring herself out for weddings and other special events where the hosts want to add an element of panache to the affair. And what better symbol of the good life than a premium, hand-rolled cigar?

"It adds that extra something," Herrick explains. "There are only a few places where the noncigarist will smoke a cigar: a business deal, on the golf course, a birth announcement and at a wedding."

Herrick doesn't seem like a stereotypical cigar aficionado—the 39-year-old account manager for Burlington's

Deerfield Inn looks athletic and athletic—but she learned her craft from a true master. For years her parents vacationed in Key West, where her father befriended a Cuban man named Angel Garcia, who always rolled his own stogies.

Inspired by the process, Herrick asked Garcia to teach her the skill of cigar making, as well as the history and traditions that surround it. Today she still uses the 100-year-old cigar cutter and wooden cigar board that Garcia gave her. The latter features an image of the Virgin Mary and a "biba a shime," she says, a testament to the Cuban's reverence for his craft.

Herrick explains how she typically works a wedding: First, she meets with the bride and groom in advance to find out how many cigars they're expecting, so she can estimate how many cigars they'll need. For example, for a 200-person affair, Herrick may recommend preparing up to 60 cigars in advance.

"You'd be surprised how many people actually want a cigar," she says, "whether they want to smoke it right there or keep it as a souvenir."

Herrick also asks the couple for their wedding colors so she can create

personalized cigar labels. These can include the wedding names, the date of the affair and its location.

On the big day, Herrick sets up her equipment at a predetermined time and place. She might roll cigars during the cocktail hour, or as an after-dinner treat. Herrick then offers a one-to-one demonstration in which she explains the cigar-rolling process, the history of cigar making, and the different characteristics of the tobacco she uses. She always has some prerolled cigars on hand for guests who want to fire up while they watch.

Herrick uses Cuban seed, headlined tobacco that's grown in the Connecticut Valley and cured in the Dominican Republic. She's very particular about the cuts of tobacco she uses, both for the filler and wrapper. Since most of the cigar's flavor derives from the wrapper, she says, sometimes she cures it beforehand with Cognac or Bailey's Irish Cream.

Herrick keeps more than one variety of tobacco on hand, too, to ensure that she can please the cigar neophyte and the connoisseur alike.

"In any wedding there's a handful of people who know exactly what they like, but they're not entirely sure why

they like it," she says. "Other people are open to whatever you're presenting. They want to know what they're tasting and how it works."

Herrick rolls her cigars in different lengths and thicknesses. In recent years, as cigars have grown in popularity—especially among women—she tends to roll smaller cigars, such as robustos and toros, which are shorter and feature a full-flavored but mild tobacco. She rolls other types as well, including the Cuban Baso, the Chalka Torpedo, the Pez Boy and the Clara Corazon.

For more seasoned cigar smokers, Herrick chooses a darker shade grown headlined tobacco with more dominant veins, which, she says, creates a "more rugged cigar."

Like a wine connoisseur, Herrick enjoys explaining to her guests the various flavors and textures of the tobacco they're experiencing, as they smoke, pointing out which ones are "leathery" or "earthy." Also, she makes sure her guests don't commit a grievous cigar-smoker faux pas, lighting the cigar with a lighter, which can compromise its flavor with butane. Wood containers only, she insists.

Herrick doesn't just work weddings. Over the years she's been hired for a variety of gigs all over the country, including celebrity golf tournaments, fundraisers, corporate parties, even an Irish wake. She's met members of the New England Patriots at a golf tournament, where she set up on the 10th hole and had cigars ready to smoke when the players rolled up to their carts.

Herrick was even hired to work the June 2008 wedding reception of Boston Red Sox owner John Henry, which was held in the outfield at Fenway Park.

"That was great!" says Herrick, herself a Boston native. "I got to run the boxes, something I wanted to do since I was 12."

For couples to be who are interested in offering their guests a Vermont Cigar Factory experience, Herrick recommends they contact her well in advance of the big day. Though winter is her quiet season, she can be booked any weekend during the summer.

Herrick's price depends on how many cigars she rolls and how long she

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says. Typically, she charges a flat "rolling fee" to cover her demonstration. Additionally, the cigars themselves range from \$5 to \$10, depending on the wrappers and type of tobacco used. As any experienced cigar smoker knows, that's a bargain for a premium, hand-rolled cigar, especially since the federal tax increased dramatically in 2009.

Vermont's strongest smoking laws generally require that cigars be smoked outdoors if employees are present. Herrick advises her couples and other event planners to check with the venue manager beforehand to ensure there's a suitable place for guests to light up.



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Despite such restrictions, Herrick says that having a cigar bar at a wedding offers guests another place to converse, chat and feel catered to. She notes with amusement how people's personalities change when they're holding a lit cigar. With one, the "shirts come out," she observes, women seem to gain an air of confidence.

Regardless of what's smoking it, there's something about puffing on a cigar, or just holding it and watching the smoke swirl into the air, that suggests, "This is a special moment to be savored.

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The Seven Days Setup

Your favorite weekly paper plays Cupid to help two singles find love. Or not.

INTRODUCTION AND INTERVIEWS BY LARRY DORR

Winter may be the worst time of the year to be single. The days are dark and bleak, the streets are empty and lonely, and it feels like everyone but you is snuggled up with their sweetie in a heavenly rug in front of a crackling fire.

We hear at Green Days wanted to do something about that. So we decided to play *Capel* by setting up two cards on a blind date. Then, we hoped, we'd sit back and watch some cards fly.

To find three horse angles, we donated our matchmaker hats and scanned our personal lists to find two folks we felt might make a good match. Then we gave the names and sent them to the Italy Flirt, read Shakespeare's *Not Just Farts* (Dine Restaurant at our annual Seven Deyars event). The rest was up to them. Here's how it went down:

Name: Mike McGuire

Age: 41

Occupation: clock maker

About $\text{Sn(H}_2\text{O)}_6^{2+}$

What's your type?

Physically active: Same-sex wife I have to call the shaft like that. I'm a very particular person. I would rather be single than dating someone who isn't right for me. I wouldn't date someone just for the hell of it, just to date someone. I'd just like to hang out with someone who has similar interests and likes to be active outdoors.

being are you a doctor?

working on business. I've done quite well at it. I'm very successful. I like to make up and plan a weekend getaway (see and there is a person who likes to be alone. I enjoy the company of someone who is alone.

Illustration courtesy of the author.

He probably will not have wanted to go for a walk, and get a hot drink or something.

Name: Allison Hicks

Age: 36

Occupation: nonprofit founder and women's health advocate

About OptimisticLoader:

What's your type?

are more involved in the fun, naturally slandering their Nordic-looking, fire-finding men: that I'm like someone who is really passionate about their work, but they're an energetic social person. I never want to compete with them, but that changes me. I think a better. Someone who's moving toward and staying who likes to travel and is on more of a hard-edged path and a little with that. Someone who's involved in the fun and the fun, but

<http://www.pisa.it/subjects/>

I think I'm a pretty attractive woman who is relatively attractive. I'm 26, I'm not a college student, heavily accomplished, mind-dependent. I like to travel. I'm not needy, I'm almost entirely. And I'm as far as I can tell, I'm really committed to philanthropy and doing good work and I think I'm very honest connected with my actions. I'm extremely outgoing and really playful. And I'm a bit witty, I can tell

Hilbert's power dreams died as?

Well, I'd totally do what we did the other night. I used that. That's great. The person would be most interested in me obviously.



The Date Daily Planet, Burlington 7 p.m.

2/26/04 I was actually out real positive going into the date but I'm generally a positive person. I figured I probably wouldn't be involved with someone who was homophobic. But I was going to have a nice meal with someone and chat.

Optimistic blends You always get a little nervous on a blind date. I've just been on so many dates and a lot of blind dates, and I wasn't too stressed. And I know the Daily Planet really well, so it was a comfort place for me.

5/14/20 I was there 10 minutes early I think she was 10 minutes late. I was disappointed when I saw her.

Optimistic blonde: He was sitting on the couch when I came in, but I didn't know that I was waiting for the hostess, so we both standing there, and he asked me if I was here for the seven days thing and I was, like, "Yeah," and he said, "Well, I guess I'm your date." And I was like, "Oh."

one, too." He seemed really uncomfortable or shy, which I think is normal.

Selfish: You sure she's a great woman. But typically I date women in their late twenties to early thirties. I feel like I was writing across from someone who was in her fifties. It's not abhorrent, I'm just saying. Physically attractive is hard to do for me, at least. I just wasn't attracted to her physically.

Epsteinsteinsblende: We went to the back and out, and it was, like "Who are you? What's your name?" kind of stuff. That was fine. I wasn't super attracted to him. He's not a bad looking guy. I probably would go out with him again, just because I've been on so many blind dates that have been way worse. But this wasn't that intense, heart-pounding wow.

SWITCH: I talked most of the time. I just talked about my life and everything. And I asked her some questions about what she did. Pretty much the conversation was just based on job-related things and other things I do on the

side. I think we had a great conversation. I mean, it would be pretty quick.

O'Donnell/Tablada: I didn't feel like he asked me a lot about myself. Like, I was being the coordinator. I share my whole story with everyone, so I want guys to actually ask me about myself. So, I didn't share anything with him in that way. He asked me a little a bit about what I do. I felt like he was not interested in me at all.

Sedgwick: Initially, I was skeptical whether or not I was going to have fun. I just felt like — it's difficult, obviously to meet people who have similar interests. I've been on hundreds of dates. OK, maybe not hundreds. But I've only been on a few second dates, by choice. I just figured I wouldn't be sitting across from someone who had the same pattern as I do. But I had a good time chatting with her.

Optimastichlerus: It was definitely a good conversation. But he talked a lot about his design history and his other



BECOMING A TEMPORARY WEDDING OFFICIANT IN VERMONT

If you're asked to officiate a friends or family member's wedding and you don't want to become ordained in the interim, the state offers a temporary officiant certificate. Between July 2005 and June 2010, Vermont issued 530 of them—earning a meager share of change for a state going in with budget deficits.

These certificates cost \$100 and are good for one day only. With one in hand, you are able to sign a marriage license and, within 15 days, its official—yourself—must be filed.

Several wedding-related types of certification including ordination from informal services such as the Universal Life Church, which are typically free. What if down the line, the courts declare your offshoot clergy status invalid? Regulators says Linda Hill, who administers Vermont's temporary officiant certification.

In other words, you don't get out of the marriage if the officiant wasn't legit.

—L.J.

B vermontlife.com/weddingofficiant.htm

Pronouncement Anxiety

Veteran officiants explain the ins and outs of uniting friends in marriage

BY LAUREN OBER

Five years ago, a friend asked me if I would consider being in her wedding. But she didn't want me to stand by her side as a bridesmaid in a marriage dress, or to perform a dramatic reading of her favorite poem. Nor did she care to have me toss flower petals or carry rings on a satin pillow.

No, what my friend wanted from me was more complicated than sauntering down the aisle and smiling pretty. She wanted me to marry her. And her fiancé? Together Forever.

I must admit that, at first blush, the request was thrilling. Who has more authority, more power over the tenor of the ceremony than the officiant? This is the person who asks the couple if they take each other in sickness and in health, for all the days of their lives. Who unites two souls? Who is

responsible for the service's success or failure?

That's a lot of pressure for one person who is neither religious nor monastic. The more I thought about it, the less officiating sounded like such a great proposition.

What did I know about marriage and the ultimate commitment? I didn't know any married folks who stuck it out to the end except my grandparents, and I don't think they ever liked each other. Wouldn't I be more opportune as a pleasing face smiling up at the couple from the rows of guests, rather than standing in front of them on the dais asking them, "Do you...?"

In the end, my desire to be part of the wedding defused my trepidation. I agreed to officiate. While the ceremony was not without its hickeys, it was unique, and the couple was pleased.

It was a win-win deal for all of us. They got a meaningful ceremony with an appropriate mix of humor and poignancy, and I got to join an ever-increasing group of lay people who can say they have hitched two of their pals.

In recent years, the number of people getting ordained through virtual ministries such as the Universal Life Church has exploded. Anecdotal evidence suggests weddings performed by friends and family are on the upswing. Perhaps this is because people have come to believe that marriage is less about religion and as attendant hierarchy and doctrinal constraints, and more about community and family.

What clerical figures still have over us is joy, at least in terms of marrying people are the twin advantages of history and experience, as well as an

acute understanding of ceremony. Priests, ministers and rabbis know how to get the job done. Most of us, unless we're electrical types who can improve, do not. But that doesn't mean we can't learn.

Before you take on the responsibility of being the officiant, you need to ask yourself if you can handle it, says Kristy Blume, a non-denominational minister (her ordination came from an ad in the back of *Rolling Stone* three years ago) who performs roughly 40 weddings a year. Committing to running the ceremony will require a level of comfort with public speaking something that Blume, an actor and theater director, certainly has. If that prospect makes you queasy, perhaps it's best to take a pass.

"Don't say yes unless you're really willing to do it," Blume counsels. "There's no reason to stress out a friendship over such a big occasion. This is not the time to challenge yourself."

Once you say yes to performing a friend's or family member's wedding, you need to figure out what the couple wants, says Marisa, a non-denominational officiant with a decade of experience marrying people: Is their suggestion for the couple. Stay away from traditional wedding gags.

"I advise every couple to not read anything on [TheKnot.com] or to Emily

Post or Martha Stewart," Moretti says. "They just put out this list of shoulds. You should do this, you should do that. But Martha doesn't know you."

He tells couples to close their eyes and envision what their wedding will look like — "picture a picture of the day." To mitigate the stress and anxiety, Moretti reminds the couple that only two things have to happen on their wedding day: (1) Both parties have to indicate consent to marriage, and (2) the officiant has to witness that consent. Beyond that, "It's all bells and whistles," he says.

Cutting the couple to a place where they can envision the wedding they want, and not the wedding their friends and family want, is essential. From there, you can begin a discussion of the ceremony itself.

One of the most important rules of the officiant in those early planning days is to act as the couple's sounding board. When they talk about elements they'd like to use in the ceremony, Moretti suggests asking them why such components are meaningful. What does this reading or that tradition say to or about the couple?

It's not meant to be an interrogation but an opportunity to reinforce the couple's values. If your friends are thinking about adding movements such as handfasting or candle lighting, asking them to explain their motivation can help refine the ceremony.

Once you have discussed important components, you need to design the ceremony itself. There is a basic structure to every wedding ceremony, says Blume, so there's no need for protracted recreation.

Begin with a prayer, a poem or some kind of reading. Talk about why the partners are good together. Throw in a reading or a song. Then you're on to the vows, which are "a little bit tricky," Blume says.

The Internet is a boundless resource for ceremony structure ideas, as well as handprint vows. If the couple chooses to write and read their own, Blume stresses, they needn't memorize them. "It's the voice idea over. It's just asking for trouble," she says.

After the vows, the officiant can offer some final thoughts — another

poem or a blessing — and it's on to the pronouncement and the much-anticipated smooch. Then, so the officiant, you're home free and making a bedtime for the open bar.

It's one thing to plan a ceremony, another thing to perform it. How do you get the couple (and yourself!) from governing paddles to relaxed and happy? According to Moretti, it's all about breathing, both real and metaphorical.

In successful wedding services, he says, energy is shifted onto the couple, off them and back throughout the ceremony. When the focus is on you, you can switch it by pausing occasionally and checking in with the couple through little jokes or gentle touches. The calmer you are, the more at ease they'll be.

"You want to create some space, and let them relax and reflect," Moretti says. "The hardest part of being an officiant

is dealing with whatever emotions come up."

When the day of the wedding I'd agreed to officiate finally rolled around, the couple and I had sketched out the structure of the ceremony and written the script for the day together. I cracked some jokes, remembered to stand up straight and fashioned a genuine smile so the

assembled knew it was a wedding, not a funeral. I talked about the couple's attributes and even a few of their feelings, albeit briefly and with love.

I explained the traditions they had chosen to incorporate into the ceremony — a champagne and some glass breaking. I prompted them to read their vows and then proudly pronounced that, by the power vested in me by the state of New York and the Universal Life Church, they were married.

Things didn't go exactly as planned. But the only people who knew that were the bride and groom, and they were too over the moon to care. It was a lot of work to make sure my friends got what they wanted. And it was emotionally draining to participate so intimately in such a momentous life event. But it was worth it.

"It's the best seat in the house," Moretti says. "It is so delicious."

I wholeheartedly agree. ☐

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Something Old

Giving new life to a vintage ring

BY MEGAN JAMES



I t didn't surprise jeweler David Steco that the bride-to-be who wanted her vintage engagement ring remade was nervous to commit to a jeweler. Steco's ring isn't a big deal, jeweler do it all the time. But for someone who has just inherited an estate piece, it can be scary to leave it in the hands of a stranger. Finding a jeweler is like finding a dentist, Steco says. "You want to find somebody you trust."

Luckily, there's an embarrassment of riches in our area when it comes to jewelers. Downtown Burlington alone boasts more than half a dozen. "We know each other, we're competitors," Steco says. "But there's nobody — at Church Street, you'd get a bad job done."

On a recent afternoon, Steco and fellow jeweler Neil Wiener are working on rings in the studio they share. The place is dusty, with fluorescent lights and a toney radio. Both men have worked as jewelers for more than 20 years — Steco owns Designer's Circle on Church Street — and you can tell by the graceful way they navigate the cluttered room that they've shared a work space much of that time.

Steco, 56, is making an engagement ring from the 1930s. It's platinum with delicate filigree, a half-carat center diamond and six tiny round diamonds around it. He plans to reduce the ring by one sixth while sparing an engraving from its previous owner. To do this, he'll have to cut from the side.

Steco saws through the band, steadily advancing his fingers — "This will cut right to the bone," he says — then gingerly uses pliers to bring the sides together. Next, most jewelers use a torch to fuse the joint, but a few Vermont jewelers use lasers. Steco is one of them. The \$30,000 instrument allows him to use platinum as his solder metal, matching the lost end of the ring.

"It takes a tremendous amount of heat to get platinum to flow," he says. For white gold and silver, the melting point is 1600 to 1800 degrees; for platinum, it's roughly 3000 degrees. If you don't have a laser, you have to use a solder metal that melts at a lower temperature, so as not to melt the whole ring.

Steco puts his hands inside the machine and aims the laser at the joint, setting off tiny fireworks. While he works, he talks about marriage.

"I'm on my second one," he says. "I can tell you this: If you guys communicate with one another, you'll go a long way toward consummating and you won't."

Of course it helps to share some interests, which Steco and his wife, Dolores Kurjan, do. In fact, she's the owner of Vintage Jewelers on College Street and contracted him for this job.

Kurjan, 47, can trace her love of vintage jewelry to a couple, stunning ring she first saw more than a decade ago. She was working at Designer's

Circle when a woman came in with a 1930s 18-carat white-gold ring with delicate filigree and a row of European-cut diamonds. The woman's daughter had inherited it from an aunt but didn't want it; she wanted to buy a new computer. "I fantasized about that ring," Kurjan says, but the store didn't deal in vintage jewelry at the time, so she bought it herself. "I still love the ring, but I'm sure that computer's long gone," she notes.

On a recent afternoon, Kurjan is wearing a long, Victorian neckline adorned with a cross choker full of amethysts. It's not hers, she says; it's a piece she's selling, but it spoke to her today. The shop, she says, seems what godliness, "is like a big jewelry box... I try not to [wear too much of it], because then I want to keep it."

Vintage Jewelers' showroom is a wonderful of sparkles and bubbles,

**A DIAMOND,
IT TURNS OUT,
IS FOREVER, BUT
THE MOUNTING
WILL WEAR AWAY.**
DOLORES KURJAN



Range of vintage jewelry

art deco rings, curved necklaces and elaborate brooches. Karpas has everything from 19th rings to 16-cent gold pocket watch from the 1850s. But diamond engagement rings are her biggest market. Couples buy vintage rings, have their own resized or repaired, or create a whole new design around vintage stones.

A diamond, it turns out, is forever, "but the mounting will wear away," Karpas says. So, how do you care for your vintage ring? First, take it to a jeweler who can check the setting and the tips of the prongs to make sure the gem is secure. Once everything's tight, jewelers recommend taking it back every three to six months to be checked, because stones loosen up with normal wear.

One of the easiest ways to damage an engagement ring is to wear it next to your wedding band. The rings rub against each other and the central setting wears away and, eventually, becomes rather sharp.

"The gaily of this is well," says Karpas. She's only been married since August, but already the setting on her platinum engagement ring is wearing down. One solution is to weld the two

rings together, which adds strength to both. But people usually aren't so crazy about that idea. Neither is Karpas.

"I figure, well, you wear it out," she says. "It's an older piece, which we repaired and remounted because it was worn out. Somebody else did what I'm doing and wore it out."

Still, for longevity, you can't beat platinum. It can usually last until the next generation without any repair, Karpas says, while white gold might need attention after 10 to 12 years.

Back at Sacco's workshop, he slips the platinum engagement ring on a metal post and bangs it with a mallet to round it out. He washes it, buff it, slides a dental probe through its nooks and crevices, and the ring is as good as new.

Finishing up the job, Sacco offers one more piece of advice. There's no art to receiving jewelry, he says, just as there's no art to giving it. "Don't complain about what you get," he says. "If you don't like it, just judge the person as that they'll be getting into the same that you have. Because, if you say you don't like it, you're not going to get another piece of jewelry."

The man knows what he's talking about. ☐

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To Change or Not to Change?



A bride-to-be considers name dropping, and keeping

BY MEGAN JAMES

I once spent an entire math class writing "Megan Miller" over and over, in the pages of my Trapper Keeper. Oh, Doug Miller, you were so dreamy! It was no coincidence that I was cast as your wife in our fourth-grade musical, *My Mom Winkie*. Your blond hair, your math smarts, your enthusiastic participation in chores. You were the Gilbert Blythe to my Anne Shirley. We were meant to be together.

Like so many young girls, I engaged in the ritual of fantasy name-changing long before I had my first boyfriend—or dared talk to boys, for that matter. I grew out of it. I went to college and dropped my last in women's and gender studies just enough to start feeling I was getting close to my life simply because I was a woman.

Then I started writing for newspapers and saw my name in print. What a name! I thought, wack after wack (such is the heady effluence of a byline). I've never going to say I felt proud of my wack and my slendery. I couldn't imagine being anyone else.

Until a few weeks ago, when I asked my friend—in that glib way you do when you're testing emotional waters—if he'd be best if I didn't take his last name. His earnest response took me aback. "Wah," he said. "I kind of would."

Daniel doesn't cling to traditional gender roles. He talks seriously about being a stay-at-home dad. He has a weakness for self-help novels. I've known him to set up a full-service salon in our bedroom to cut my hair and wax my legs. I never imagined he would care what I did with his name.

So I went looking for some history. The first American women to keep their maiden name after marriage was Lucy Stone, a Massachusetts suffragette in the 1850s. A league of Lucy Stones exists to this day, fighting to keep women from abandoning their names,

which they consider a form of sex discrimination. But, according to a study conducted several years ago at Harvard, the percentage of women keeping their maiden names after marriage dropped between 1990 and 2000, from 28 to 17 percent.

In some ways, I'd more easily give up Megan. My mother named me after Meggie Glavin from the hit 1940s miniseries "The Thorn Birds." When I was in middle school, she made me switch it with her. She kept through the entire thing. I thought it was creepy. What could a girl my age possibly see in lovely old priest Richard Chamberlain?

But "Bama" is another story. I've in single syllable, no single redundancy. It connects me to my English family, to my grandmother Olive in London, who was literally blown off the toilet when a Nazi deathling dropped on the house next door (she survived to enthusiastically tell the tale). It connects me to my father.

My mother thinks I should do it—change my name. "That's the whole point of getting married," she says. "It's about forming a union, becoming family." Her parents never even gave her a middle name. Why bother? They figured she'd just go to get married anyway.

She eagerly took my father's name, all but donating her maiden name to oblivion. Until recently, when she started writing professionally again—she had written for newspapers before she married—and quickly slipped the name back into her byline.

A friend of mine has been married more than a decade but still has to mouth out the spelling of her husband's name every time she writes it. A book clerk caught her doing it recently and asked to see extra ID. Lately she's considered going back to her maiden name.

Many of my unmarried friends say they'll never take their partner's name. Some are PhD candidates

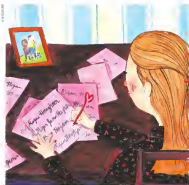
already publishing — one admitted she's keeping her Spanish name because it boosts her chances of getting grants — while others believe it's simply unfair for either partner to ask the other to give up a name.

The patriarchal implications of the tradition aren't lost on me. But neither are the recent origins of marriage itself, and that didn't stop me from agreeing to marry this guy. Daniel says he'll consider adding my name to his, but frankly, I'm not sure I want to share it. We could create a brand-new name, but that strips away what I have most about me. They look up to our ancestors.

The other day, for the first time in

But when I began to consider taking his name, something strange happened: I started to feel the weight of what I've signed up for. When we get married, we won't just be throwing a party for our family and friends, we'll be agreeing to merge our lives — for the rest of our lives. That's a big fucking deal. I don't want it to feel incidental. I can't pretend that a commitment so huge won't change me.

And Daniel? He says it's just as scary sharing his name with me. What if I want him for it? He jokes that he'll be forever indebted to me. Never again can he refuse my requests for a buck ride, never again override my picks as our Netflix queue.



years, I opened a notebook and wrote out a list of potential names I don't like the rhythm of Megan Houghton. The repetition of the two syllable names, both ending in "on," sounds clunky. But James Houghton — that's not bad! It's like an Oreo-cookie, with James as the one-syllable cream filling.

I was winning on the idea, so I asked Daniel why it mattered to him. None of his three older sisters kept the name, he told me. "He would take ownership of it."

Daniel and I have been together for five years and lived together for the last four and a half. For all intents and purposes, we're already married. It's difficult to imagine how making it legal will change anything.

When I realized the ring he gave me — his maternal grandmother's engagement ring — it was important to me that we keep the engraving intact: TMD for Thomas Mison Davies and FBR for Frances Reeves Foster. I loved those names as soon as I heard them, but it wasn't until I started wearing the ring that I understood why: Neither is mine, yet they arrived on my finger like a map to the past. I want to be a part of that map going forward.

But who says I'm kidding? It's silly to try and justify it. I am not a rational person, and this is not a rational decision. All it took was one inspiring look from the man I love, and I was sold. After all, it's just a name. □

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The marriage formula at most Westerners know it goes something like this: Two people meet — in class, at a party, online, whatever. If there's a spark, they go on a date. This evolves into courting and courtship, and now both are drinking the Kool-Aid of romantic love. Somewhere along the line, they most likely sleep together. They may meet in together eventually, one slips a ring on the other's finger, and our couple sets off for the happily ever after.

Yet almost half the time, at least in the United States, these unions end in

arrange one's betrothal was accepted practice.

How such an arrangement might come about — and thrive — in the 21st century is the crux of *For Seven Lifetimes: An East-West Journey to a Spiritually Fulfilling and Sustainable Marriage*, by Vatsala and Ehad Sperling. The book is an expansion of a volume first written by the couple 10 years ago.

Ehad Sperling, who looks a decade younger than his 64 years, is chief executive of the Rochester, Vt., publishing house Inner Traditions. He was recovering from a divorce 16 years ago when he reached he was no longer interested in

seriously practical and a believer in arranged marriage, she set about arranging her own.

Vatsala began replying to ads. Most of the time she got no response, but occasionally she received "very negative and insulting replies," she writes. Vatsala learned to read the ads skillfully. "I could almost read the mind of the person... I could easily classify these advertisers as not crazy, not very crazy, figure crazy, color crazy, degree crazy, status crazy, culture crazy, egoistic, slave driver, authoritarian, broke better," she recounts in the book.

One spring day in 1996 Ehad's ad captured her attention. "I am the owner and Chief Executive of a successful International Book Publishing Company based in Vermont [sic], USA, seeking an alliance with an Indian girl with a view to immediate matrimony and parenthood." Ehad went on to describe himself as Jewish, slim and handsome, and insisted that costs and religion were on her list. He offered her future bride "stability, status, international travel, financial security and commitment." Most importantly to Vatsala, Ehad promised freedom and support in maintaining her culture and religion. "That spoke to him as an individual," says Vatsala, who found her best pen to write him a letter. She had a feeling that the ad "would take me where I belonged."

Vatsala's response was one of hundreds (told by an acquaintance of Ehad's who, due to the publisher's distance, served as his marriage screener in India. The friend chose five women to recommend, including Vatsala.

She and Ehad traded 99 letters over the ensuing few months, probing away detail of the values they felt had to align to ensure a successful union: religion, spirituality, sex, parenthood, even their day and date of marriage. The markers are probably familiar to online daters: the letters, the awkward first phone conversation, the even more charged first meeting. In this case, Vatsala's brother accompanied her and, at the end of the meeting, asked Ehad if he was ready to marry his sister.

"I will have to think on it and tell you tomorrow," Ehad told him, which surprised but amazed Vatsala. "If Ehad needed this extra 88 hours of time, he could have it," she says. "I had lots of patience."

On February 22, 1996, a little less than a year since they had begun to correspond, Ehad and Vatsala's family and friends converged on a seaside town

A More Perfect Union?

A new book defends arranged marriages

BY CORIN HIRSCH



Ehad and Vatsala Sperling

divorce. One partner may not really want kids after all, or parents putting cancer on the back burner. One likes to travel and academia, while the other would rather nest at home. Big things such as values converge with little, annoying habits to sour a love affair that once seemed rosy and blissful.

There's a simple remedy to this dilemma, according to some traditionalists: arranged marriages. These two words make most modern, Western couples cringe. But, for thousands of years and across many cultures, having one's family

what he calls the "best divorce" of Western courtship and dating.

A dear friend, Inner Traditions author Ilsebeth Johnson, suggested Ehad marry an Indian woman. "I thought, five or six I going to do that? It was a departure for me," says Ehad, who grew up in New York City. Yet, through a series of chance encounters and serendipitous events, he found himself placing an ad in the "matrimonial" section of Indian newspaper the *Shabd*.

R.R. Vatsala had been scanning those ads for five years. It was a Sunday ritual for families with formulas of marriageable age: Vatsala — whose family called her *shakti*, meaning "divorced one" — was 34 and head of clinical microbiology at a children's hospital near Madras, where she lived. Vatsala had entered early marriage to pursue a PhD and career by the time she was ready to marry; her parents were elderly and her brothers were busy with families of their own.



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in Kerala for a glamorous, dazzling wedding celebration. As is customary in India, the bride and groom presented themselves to each other for seven lifetimes. Their cross-cultural marriage made Indian newspapers, along with the story of how they found each other.

A few days later, Khad brought his new wife back to his mountainside home in Rochester, where the serene, wooded terrain and small population initially disoriented a woman used to the bustle, noise and heat of her native Tamil Nadu.

Khadi's enormous dog, Neagle took some getting used to, so will The couple eventually settled into a comfortable life together and had a son, Mahir. This is where their first book, 1990's *Marriage Made in Heaven: A Love Story in Letters*, ends.

Their templates for marriage can be found among those early letters Khadi's was "DO. Love, honor and obey your husband and second him in his rightful place as head of household. DON'T. Challenge, criticize or ridicule him. DO. Support your husband to get you and family before his own interests. DON'T. Be demanding." Those matched with Vatsala's extensiveness for "be crossbreeding, mixing up a roles — in other words, the man does not try wearing a skirt and the woman does not try wearing trousers."

Though many reviewed the book favorably, kickback against the couple's story and the seemingly 1850s gender roles it presented were uncommon, especially from women. One reader wrote on Amazon.com: "[Khad Spierling] has the undeserved good fortune to link up with Ms. Vatsala, and I feel really sorry for this utterly wonderful lady. I can only hope after she gets fed up with his big shot, alpha dog mentality, she can make a good life for herself in the US."

A decade after their book's first printing, the Spierlings decided to revisit the volume with an update. For them, the heart of *The Seven Lifetimes* is the idea of marriage based on shared values and a platform for spiritual growth. It was important for Khad to be open with Vatsala about his dominant nature prior to marrying. "As a publisher, I am used to being obeyed," he says now. With salt and pepper hair crowning an intense, bronzed face, Khad exudes authority tempered by thoughtfulness. "I got the final say; it is not a democracy. What do I do in the relationship? I needed to know how [Vatsala] would deal with an alpha

dog. How do we navigate this dynamic? Does Vatsala want a strong man?"

He believes the book's advice sets the boundaries for the couple's rules and suggests criticism is one of the worst mental toxins. "Do you want a guy who can make tough decisions? Then don't chip a little bit of his point of each day," he says during an interview. During their courtship, Vatsala reacted to this attitude with elegant dry humor. In a letter, she began calling Khad "Captain."

"I thought, 'This is someone who can play the game of life,'" he says.

In Vermont, Vatsala, 56, still wears a red band on her forehead and dresses in a traditional Indian sarri topped with a dark blue blazer. Her gaze is unwavering, and she waits patiently to comment after her husband's energetic answers. She points out that rule power is sometimes an illusion, but a necessary one. "In our culture, a man would decide when a child will marry. It's his right. But in practice, the women make all of the decisions," she explains. "Most of the time I don't feel like I have to hold myself back," Vatsala counters. "He expresses his views about something, and we come to an agreement together."

In the 15 years since they married, Vatsala has published seven children's books based on Indian mythology, she also runs a homopathy practice in Rochester. "That son is 12, and knows traditions is healthy. The marriage, like any other, is not always easy — they tell the tribulations of getting along 'togetherness' and negotiating them requires what Khad calls 'Vitamin D tolerance.' In India," he explains, "they [Indians] have a level of tolerance I've never seen [elsewhere] as harsh."

For dating couples considering marriage, the Spierlings have some suggestions. "Start by investigating. Start by sharing your value system," Khad says, rather than jumping into bed or being swept up by the current of love.

Once a couple is married, the Spierlings' advice is more succinct. "Keep your mouth shut," he adds.

"Just shut up," offers Vatsala almost cheerfully. But, it seems, are referring to themselves. ☺

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A Twisted Tale

Theater review: *Oliver Twist*

BY ELIZABETH CRAIN

What makes a play compelling theater — engaging the audience with a great story, or teasing them with clever stagecraft? Call me old-fashioned, but I'm more captivated by the well-told tale. Great storytelling is not at the heart of British playwright Neil Barrett's 2004 adaptation of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* (1837-38) around some of the most memorable fiction since cinema first spun fables about the Big Woolly Mammoth That Got Away. There's a reason the British author's work has never gone out of print: *His* goes good-story.

Victorian-inspired visual, stylistic and musical elements from Barrett's dark version, a play with live music and several song choruses. But, by making the hero a hapless victim and betraying the ending halfway through Act 1, Barrett dispenses some of the dramatic tension.

That said, Vermont Stage Company's current production of this *Twist* still entices. It showcases mesmerizing performances by outstanding local actors — many of them making their VSC debuts — in an aggressively re-created world.

Dickens was just 35 when he created the plucky orphan protagonist of *Oliver Twist*, or, *The Parish Boy's Progress*. What we now read as a novel originally came out in monthly installments, from February 1837 to April 1839, in the *London*.

Magazine. Dickens edited Barrett's *Brooklyn*. The young author was not far removed from his own painful childhood experience, labored in a shoe-polish factory while his father languished in debtors' prison. In 19th-century England, poverty robbed children of childhood.

In society's eyes, poverty and filthiness also irreversibly stain orphan Oliver's moral character. He grows up at the grimy workhouse where his unnamed mother died as a child, but gets hoisted from that meager shelter at age 10 for accidentally receiving a second helping of gruel. His funeral home apprenticeship quickly goes wrong. The underlayer's wife, like almost everyone Oliver meets, assumes the worst: "Born of a bad mother! Born to go wrong at one time or another!"

Oliver flees to London and falls into the clutches of Fagin, who controls a gang of pickpockets and thieves. Oliver tries to save or exploit the boy as he tries to survive the big city's bewitching allure. From Fagin's criminal associate Bill Sikes and Sayer Streetwarden Nancy to the gentle Mr. Brownlow and his daughter, Rose. Will the

child ever overcome the circumstances of his birth?

Josephically playwright Barrett makes Oliver nearly a nonentity in his own story (like fellow founding David Copperfield, *Twist* remains an unforgettable Dickensian character because he becomes the unlikely hero of his own life). Barrett portrays him as a mere pawn, giving the actor brief, sleep-perfume-damn-it-out-of here lines in the Vermont Stage production. Director Jason Jacobs doesn't balance the passive, underwritten part — played by sweet-faced Lily Bellamy, 11 — with much action or exposure.

The adults in the ensemble "household" drive into their roles with gusto. Most play multiple parts. Rustin Christopher is the most impressive character: A hollow-eyed, hunger-stricken orphan hunched over his gruel becomes the sophisticated, money-brother, house-husband bearing in the postscript an Oliver's requiem. A few scenes later, Christopher morphs into a marvelous magister, deity of good hanging while unburied.

Jordan Gullison, as Bill Sikes, and Chris Carroll, as Nancy, give nuanced, spell-binding performances. Gullison conveys menacing, soulless villainy with "two swirling eyes," just as Dickens describes. Carroll captures Nancy's ferocity, fading anger, determination and cunning as the ransacker her desperate world. Gullison

achieves her descent when she tries to rescue Oliver's sibling, especially in scenes with Rose Brownlow, elegantly portrayed by Tanya Nadeau. The women connect strongly in their characters cope with a giant class divide.

Fagin is the star of Barrett's script. Rather than show the criminal's progression from evil to goodness, however, Ethan T. Brown's portrait starts at cruel and creepy and stays there. Barrett does harness brutality but the representation of Fagin's ramblings makes the laundry eventually lag. As the *Artful Dodger*, however, New York actor Ruby Rose questions the pass. She's sharp, sly and always in the know.

Jason G. Fisher's scenic and costume design evokes Oliver's character in gorgeously rendered visual elements. Threaded music, cast-off possessions and a grimy palette of drab neutrals surround the orphan and criminals, while the wealthy embrace a shiny, color-filled world. John B. Forbes uses stark lighting effects to emphasize these contrasts. Particularly



Lily Bellamy (Oliver) and Rustin Christopher (Mr. Brownlow)

effective in stark lighting that mirrors 19th-century gothic longings.

Quickly incidental music and sound effects, performed live, work wonderfully to heighten the production's wistful, Victorian feel. Nottingham musician David Symone, who composed the score, plays accordion. Emma Goppen plays violin (She also uses other instruments, often quite memorably, from piano to school bell.) The song numbers are some what less successful. Symone's repeated writing is fine, but Barrett inserts most of the choruses without checking his playwrights' "why do my characters sing here?" meter. The songs interrupt, rather than advance, the story.

How Victorian costumed Dickens' work explains, in part, his mastery of storytelling. Suspenseful plotting and unforgettable characters led readers eagerly awaiting the next installment. When it came out, families gathered in the parlor and listened while one person read aloud Dickens' lively prose. Staid Victorian drawing rooms became vivid playhouses of imagination. Today, our closest communal experience to this is live theater, which Vermont is blessed with a deep pool of local talent. It's best when they can start with a really good story. **D**

Find them: Wednesday 7:30pm, 8:30pm, 9:30pm at Vermont Stage Company, 1000 Flynn, Burlington, Vermont 554-1111. Wednesday through Saturday at 7:30pm, Saturday and Sunday at 2pm, 5pm, 7:30pm, 9:30pm.



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I tell myself not to expect anything. The Charm City Cakes. Surely there can be no comparison between the colorful, sprawling "Isle of Cakes" work space I watch on the Food Network and the shop where I am headed in Waterbury Center. But both bakers turn out such enticing, space-packed creations that I can't help but feel an excited thrill as I trudge through the snow to the door of Vermont Cake Studio, which specializes in custom wedding cakes.

Once inside, I see the studio scarcely allows more standing room than my own narrow kitchen. Instead of whimsical cakes lining the tables, the place is packed with stainless-steel appliances, including the largest stand mixer and whisk I've ever seen. The inimitable scent of sugar and butter wafts from a massive oven, evidence that owner and pastry chef Berna Williams has already been busy before my 10 a.m. arrival on a recent Sunday. She's agreed to let me spend the day under her wing as something of an apprentice baker. I'm just glad she didn't refuse her usual 5 a.m. wake-up call.

Ever since sitting in an ice cube tanning last summer (such is the *diff* foodie life of a maid of honor), I've been fascinated with frosting and fondant. I've never had the patience for pastry bags in my own kitchen projects, and fondant seems instrumentally scary. But I can't argue with the results: pretty cakes. From frosting pearls to sugar flowers, those fancy confections mean like the glassware older cousins to my single-layer chocolate-pure or one-bowl strawberry pound cakes. In short, it's because I'm just a novice that my baked goods need a serious makeover.

Before I've even had on my apron, Williams has cut out circles of parchment paper to line the bottoms of two small cake pans, and divided vanilla-cake batter between them. The next morning, she's giving a quick chop to a bank of bitersweet chocolate the size of a cutting board, then popping the pieces in the microwave to form the base of her chocolate ganache.

A bride and groom will arrive shortly for a tasting, she tells me, pointing the



Slice of Life

Is foraging into fondant really a piece of cake?

BY CAROLYN FOX

now-melting chocolate through a fine-mesh strainer. Though their wedding at Stone Mountain Lodge is about half a year away, they're right on schedule — unlike some couples who still wanting a cake made that day, Williams says. That's a tall order, considering she and her assistant pastry chef, Kristen Stekler, work no more than two cakes per weekend.

It takes three days to make a fancy cake, I learn. Williams bakes on Wednesday, fills on Thursday, frosts on Friday and delivers on Saturday. "Anyone who tells you they do it differently is probably not telling you the truth," she says. "You obviously can't do it all in one day." As Williams pipes frostings and fillings

into different swirls on tasting plates, she tells me about a wedding order she once took for 300 individual Triscuitian sandwiches. Each one took three hours to make.

After all that, do sweets still hold their appeal?

"I definitely love cake," Williams says. "My best recipes are: Do I want to make up at three in the morning and... come this? If not, it's back to the drawing board. But at the end of the day, I want to go home and have snark. Or salad. You know, nothing with sugar in it."

We exit at the back of the kitchen through a hallway, which leads into the Center Bakery and General Store. Williams, who opened VCS in 2005 and

lives in an apartment upstairs, bought and remodeled the adjacent general store three years ago, adding a cafe for soups, salads, pastas and more. It's here that cake tastings take place — and, before Williams can even turn on the coffee pot, the bride and groom arrive, with one set of parents in tow.

They're set up around a table bearing photo albums of Williams' previous work. The bride remarks on one elaborate Lake Champlain-themed cake, the landscape includes fabled lake monster Chisp, underwater shipwrecks and snowflakes.

Williams, who slipped back to the kitchen for a few minutes, emerges with the perfect little layer cake I watched her stack and frost earlier. Now it miraculously sports elegant piping and shelled chocolate curls.

The clients look into the ovens. There are fluffy vanilla and chocolate cake wedges, chocolate moose, Russian buttercream, truffle cream, chocolate ganache, chocolate soufflé, Chambard buttercream and white-chocolate buttercream. After a few bites, the bride — apparently staggered out — puts down her fork.

"I don't eat dessert at all," she remarks. "I've never eaten the cake at weddings, myself."

But if there's a wedding, there is cake — or so it seems. "This is interesting," Williams tells me earlier. Canadian lawbirds have become cooped up over the holidays, and still others are knee-deep in planning summer nuptials.

After admiring photos of the bride's gown — a stunning Spanish number with vertical bein and waist detail — Williams remembers, "I'm all done, artistically." This seems to surprise the wedding party, who have only just decided to do a half-vanilla, half-chocolate cake, and are still considering whether they'd like to incorporate the tail of the bridesmaid's frocks.

But Williams has her migration. She wants to translate the wedding-dress details to fondant, and perhaps enhance the cake layers with fresh hydrangea blossoms. It fits the bride's request for

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- Database design, analysis, troubleshooting and SQL scripting
- Create and maintain data warehouses
- Create, schedule and execute ETL packages
- Develop applications in database and project applications development in storage
- Assist and advise in Applications/Systems and database design
- Configure and administer Microsoft SQL Server, services and applications

This skills/experience/qualifications:

- 4+ years experience with SQL Server 2005/2008/2008 R2 as a DBA
- Database experience in design, support and troubleshooting databases
- Microsoft SQL certification required
- Strong demonstrable knowledge of Microsoft SQL Server
- Good understanding of SQL Server Clustered, T-SQL and related database tools
- Experience with a tool and/or scripting a server backup and restore operation and system is able
- Network and services system administration is plus
- Working knowledge of IBM DB2 and Oracle data bases is a major plus
- Strong interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills are an absolute MUST have
- Strong PC application skills (MS Word, PowerPoint, Visio for other flowchart tools, Excel)
- Strong analytical mindset (able to break down processes into efficient steps)
- Good attention to detail
- A highly motivated and capable of delivering on major projects on time and within budget
- Have a recent customer focus and be easily driven
- At least one of 2 year degree (Bachelor's degree strongly preferred)

Qualified candidates should forward their resumes with salary requirements to: **Agri-Mark, Inc.**, 100 Mt. St., Methuen, MA 01844 Attn: Human Resources. Email: HR@agrimark.com. KEOC AA



Pepsi Bottling Ventures
is hiring for
the following positions:

**Bulk CR
Fleet Mechanic B
Trainee**

Interested candidates
should apply at

www.pepsibottlingventures.com



Cheesemaking and Shipping Assistant

Seeking dependable, quality-focused individual to join for cheese-making in Shelburne, Vermont. Primary duties include:

- Assist cheesemakers in every step of cheese production and processing
- Pick and pack orders for shipping, run mail-order system

General Requirements: We are looking for a team player that is flexible, fun to work with and wants to learn about the world of cheesemaking. Position requires significant physical strength and endurance. Dependability, cleanliness and attention-to-detail are essential. Ideal candidate will have time, food processing or shipping experience.

Full time second, March through December holidays. Four days per week, including one weekend day.

To learn more about this position, visit www.sheepmarkfarms.org.

Please email or mail resume to:
Neri Brown, Sheepmark Farms,
1611 Hobbs Rd.,
Shelburne, VT 05482
info@sheepmarkfarms.org



BERC
Business Energy
Resource Center

Executive Director

The Business Energy Resource Center (BERC) is a national nonprofit corporation based in Manchester, Vermont, is seeking a skilled executive director to build on our exceptional work in establishing community-wide business opportunities for environmental benefits and community economic development.

The ideal candidate will share BERC's commitment to developing sustainable business energy projects. Reporting to the Board of Directors, he or she will provide leadership, manage the organization's day to day affairs, and work with the board and staff to chart its future direction.

The position does not require a technical background in biomass or renewable energy, but an understanding of renewable energy issues, policies, and opportunities, especially at the institutional and community levels is highly desirable.

For more information on BERC and a full job description, visit www.becomcenter.org.

To apply, email resume, cover letter and salary requirements to: **Managerial HR team of BERC Search Committee** via HR@berc.org, 187 Elm Street, Suite 190-G, Portland, ME 04101.

Resume review will begin on February 15, 2011. BERC is an equal opportunity employer.

GROW YOUR CAREER IN A PLACE YOU'LL LOVE

Major Gift/ Annual Fund Officer

At Fletcher Allen, we've brought many people's hopes and dreams to life over a century. As development professionals, we are also called to give the best of ourselves to our patients and their families. We work hard to provide our clients with the resources they need to care for our patients.

Join us and develop this career you want.

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- ✓ Leadership Circle Award, Practice Greenhealth
- ✓ 12th Best Workplace for Charitable, National Center for
- ✓ Professional Development
- ✓ Great compensation and benefits

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Allen**
HEALTHCARE
A Division of Dartmouth

Learn more at
FletcherAllen.org
We're on Top. Opportunity
Empower. PROUD.



mental health clinicians

We at New England Counseling and Training Associates would like to offer licensed clinicians an opportunity to join our practice. We are a group of experienced mental health clinicians providing therapeutic services to children, adolescents, adults and families.

NECA offers the following:
• A well-regarded established mental health practice, a strong referral base, office infrastructure that includes high-speed Internet access, fax, phone and copier; a highly collaborative environment, monthly peer consultation, consultation and training with national experts in the field of trauma

Send resume to: education@necanet.com

MASTER'S-LEVEL CLINICIAN

NH's Community Based Services is looking for a skilled therapist to join our team as a Program Clinician. This person will provide individual, family, and group therapy as well as work closely with program leadership in providing wrap-around services. This is an excellent opportunity for a licensed master's-level clinician to join our dynamic team in providing excellent, creative and innovative treatment. This full time, benefit-rich position requires Vermont licensure. • Please send your resume to kathystall@necanet.com or NFI, 30 Airport Rd., So. Burlington, VT 05403.

WWW.NATI.COM



Northeastern Family Institute
Helping Thriving Children, Families & Communities Thrive



Maple Leaf Farm,

an important substance-abuse program
has the following positions open:

Full-time Licensed Clinical Social Worker and/or master's-level Mental Health Professional with a CADC/LADC

Duties include group and individual addictions counseling and case management as well as IOP group facilitation. Ideal candidate will have at least five years post-master's experience providing substance abuse treatment to a diverse population of adults, excellent writing and group facilitation skills, and knowledge of dualism, cognitive behavioral treatment approaches with persons diagnosed with substance-use disorders and co-occurring mental health disorders.

3/5 part-time evening

Milieu Counselor,

ideally with experience in the field of addictions treatment, to provide supervision to a population of adult males and females who are recovering from the effects of alcohol/drug dependency.

Per diem

Counselors

for evenings and weekends.

Ideally with experience in the field of addictions treatment. Responsibilities include group addictions psycho-education/counseling and milieu management.

The ability to work cooperatively within a clinical team is a must. Individual and group supervision provided. For more information regarding our program and available employment opportunities please visit our website.

www.mapleleaf.org

Enroll cover letter and resumes to:
Michael@mapleleaf.org, or mail to: Michael A. Zacharias, Ph.D. — Clinical Director, Maple Leaf Farm, 10 Maple Leaf Rd., Underhill, VT 05489



**NORWICH
UNIVERSITY**

DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Provide a program vision and strategic direction in developing dynamic and innovative programs, services, educational and curriculum-integrated information literacy instruction. Balance strategic development of appropriate information resources and instructional capacity for campus-based and growing online programs. Provide leadership in a team environment to ensure excellence in programs and services; provide strong advocacy within the University; promote collaboration with other libraries and academic departments; ensure stability and professional achievement; and strategically manage the Norwich Library's fiscal practices.

RESEARCH ANALYST

Carry out qualitative and quantitative research projects and act in strategic decision making for the School of Graduate & Continuing Studies. The Research Analyst will aid in data collection, work with a variety of primary and secondary data sources, conduct statistical and qualitative data analyses and prepare accessible reports that tie back to the projects' objectives among other activities.

USER SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Seeking a highly motivated individual who possesses excellent customer service skills and has experience serving and troubleshooting Mac OS computers in a Windows environment. User Support Specialists are responsible for providing computing and telecommunications support to the Norwich community via email, phone and walk-in. Responsibilities include installing, configuring, troubleshooting and repairing a wide variety of microcomputer hardware, related peripherals and software as well as a variety of end-user systems.

Please visit our website www.norwich.edu/jobs for further information and how to apply for these and other great jobs.

Norwich University is an Equal Opportunity Employer offering a comprehensive benefit package that includes medical, dental, group life and long-term disability insurance, flexible spending accounts for health and dependent care, retirement savings plan and tuition scholarships for eligible employees and their family members.

Are you interested in expanding your horizons in the dentistry field? Are you a team player with a great attitude? Do you thrive in a diverse, fast-paced environment with an emphasis on excellent patient care? Then, our office is for you.

We are seeking a highly motivated

Hygiene Assistant

to join our team.

Current radiology certification required, knowledge of Dentrix software is a plus. Competitive salary and excellent benefits.

Please submit resume and letter of interest to: edroyns.ed@necanet.com.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE THROUGH Gallagher, Flynn & Company

Gallagher, Flynn & Company is seeking local companies with matches for the following positions:

Financial Analyst

Help manage current and inventory, prepare monthly financial packages, special projects. Position could grow to Accounting Manager. BS plus five years of finance work in manufacturing required. Burlington area.

Manufacturing Engineer

Provide support to shop floor engineering, purchasing, quality and contract administration. Problems relating to improve manufacturing capabilities, quality and efficiency. Less experience required, three to five years of manufacturing experience desired. Burlington area.

Senior Design Engineer

Plan and direct projects through all stages of design, development, evaluation, test and commissioning. Provide client technical support. BSME plus 6-10 years of manufacturing engineering design with industrial sewing machinery required, plus Solidworks and ASME code knowledge. Burlington area.

Human Resource Generalist

Benefits administration and general coordination, FMLA, workers' comp administration, interviewing employee files, applying HRIS/payroll system. Degree plus three years of HR administrative experience desired. preferably in manufacturing. St. Albans area.

Please submit resume and cover letter for any of the positions described above to:

Frank Sudowski
Gallagher, Flynn & Company
Sudowski@gfc.com

**FULL-TIME TODDLER TEACHER**

WANTED Teaching position member to sports curiosity and maintain comradery and friendship with new toddlers! Must have a strong background in early education, enjoy the company and spirit of young children, plan curriculum, complete paperwork, change diapers, enjoy the outdoors, be able to pass criminal background check and keep sense of humor and calm even when you hear "No!" all day long!

ACC has been serving the community for 22 years and offers a nurturing and emergent environment for children. Join our dedicated team of professionals and committed families who make ACC a great place to work/learn/play! Great pay, benefits and generous time off.



Where
Children
Learn
Through
Play

Please send resume and three
reference references to:
accinfo@myfirstgrade.net



Thruout for all positions, including Domestic

Leaps & Bounds

looking for motivated, flexible
new players to join our growing

childcare team

in Essex, Williston, Milton and
soon to be South Burlington
locations. Must have experience,
education and a sense of humor!
Pay based on education and
experience.

Contact Kerrie at 802-879-2021
or keraltschewski@leapsandbounds.com.

Spruce Mountain Inn**CLINICAL
CASE
MANAGER**

35-40-Hour Position

Spruce Mountain Inn is a small, currently known residential treatment program in Windfield, VT. We are seeking a detail oriented person with excellent communication, problem solving and clinical skills. Function as a member of a multidisciplinary team and provide intensive case management services in a small caseload of young adult clients within the context of a highly structured therapeutic community. Master's degree and experience in case management desired. License preferred.

Send letter of interest and
resume via email to:

Gretchen Leberberger,
Assistant Director
Spruce Mountain Inn
PO Box 135
Windfield VT 05607-0135

Email:

info@sprucemountaininn.com

EMBROIDERY OPERATOR

Select Design has an immediate opening in our embroidery department. Experience is preferred, but will train the right candidate. We are a creative company that rewards those who bring a little heart and soul to their work and a commitment to be part of our evolution. Join our team in providing custom apparel to clients such as Pepp, Magic Hat, Timberland and 360's. Competitive wages based on experience and abilities. Benefits include 401(k), profit sharing, health and dental plans.

Interested applicants are asked to
submit resumes to:

careers@selectdesign.com, or 288 Flynn Ave.,
Burlington, VT 05401



www.selectdesign.com

Excellent Employment Opportunities**Part-time RN Positions Available**

Applicants must have strong leadership skills, a professional appearance, the ability to work in a fast paced environment, be a part of a team and maintain a positive attitude.



Senior Management



Senior Management

Please email resumes to:
Rose.Cleveland.cleveland@lodgeatshelburne.com

The Lodge at Shelburne Inn
185 Post Avenue Shelburne, VT 05488 • 802-885-9947
www.thelodgeatshelburne.com • www.lodgeatshelburne.com

**MAPLE LEAF FARM
From Addiction to Recovery****Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
or
Medical Assistant (MA)**

20-32 hours/week, to assist in the primary care unit. Duties include phlebotomy, casting/nursing with patient admissions, clinic flow and clinic clerical duties. Ideal candidate will have on-site self working with a diverse patient population working on recovery. Candidate needs to be able to work some weekends and evenings.

Mail or fax resumes to:
Maple Leaf Farm Associates, Inc.,
10 Maple Leaf Rd., Underhill, VT 05489
Phone: 802-499-2911 Fax: 802-499-3617
Email: info@mapleleaf.org

A UNITED WAY MEMBER AGENCY





**Special Olympics
Vermont**

President/CEO

Special Olympics Vermont (www.sovt.org) has an immediate opening for a President/CEO to lead our organization as we strive to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. The President and CEO is the chief administrative official of Special Olympics Vermont and is responsible for providing strategic leadership and long-term direction and achieving financial goals set by the Board of Directors. The primary function of the President/CEO is to guide and direct the program in accordance with the standards, policies and procedures set forth by Special Olympics Inc. and the Special Olympics Vermont Board of Directors. Go to www.sovt.org/careers.php for a full position description.

QUALIFICATION:

- Ph.D. degree in business management or a related field
- 3+ years experience as a management or leadership role
- 3+ years experience with SOVI/COI in either capacities as a professional or volunteer staff
- Commitment to recognized volunteer values and the mission of Special Olympics
- Demonstrated leadership and successful track record in development and fundraising for an organization
- Excellent verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills
- Strong analytical/quantitative skills to prepare budget, budget planning and monitoring of program results
- Experience managing staff with low time budgets
- Two separate formal or direct executive rights preferred
- 3-5: scholarship as a valid 2-5 work permit as an alternate requirement

No phone calls will be accepted

To be considered, applicants must submit the following as an email attachment to sovtjobs@vtse.org:

- A letter of application made and addressed to the following: A current resume/DN in written correspondence format
- A list of at least three professional references including name, contact information and consent of reference to be reference
- Reference to President & CEO position in the email subject line



Cook

The Coconuts Home
in Burlington is looking for a full time cook to prepare meals for our 60 residents. Previous cooking and baking experience required. Suitable application in reply. Work report of a busy but fun time that focuses on quality customer service.
Hours are Sun 10:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. via through Tuesday 6 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. with Fri. and Sat. off.
Send resume to:
karen@theconuthome.com



Advanced Concert Ticket Sales

South Burlington
F/T PERMANENT POSITION

Client speaking voice and great attendance record required. Six per hour after training.
Plus weekly bonus structure.
44hr/2wks
achievable. RAD vacations, holidays and sick days.
Group life, vision and dental.
ROOM for advancement.
Complementary tickets

Call
802-652-9629
to schedule
an interview.

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

Liquid Measurement Systems

LMS is one of Vermont's fastest growing engineering companies. LMS specializes in the design, development, manufacture and testing of fuel measurement systems for the commercial, military and general aviation markets.

LMS is looking for a team player with a can-do attitude who can perform engineering duties in the planning, designing and maintenance of fuel management products relating to the aerospace and defense industries. Knowledge of design techniques 3D modeling software and blueprint reading required. Experience with AutoCAD, Inventor and SolidWorks preferred.

LMS offers a competitive benefits package including health, life and AD&D insurance, dental insurance, vacation pay, personal time, vacation abroad, tuition reimbursement, wellness 401(k), and pension plan.

Interested parties may apply to hr@liquidmeasurement.com

LMS is an EEO employer
(Equal Opportunity Employer)



Marketing Coordinator

Adaptive Publishing, a leading independent academic publisher, is seeking a Marketing Coordinator in our Burlington office.

The Marketing Coordinator's responsibilities include, but are not limited to: preparing and executing promotional plans for assigned publications; creating printed and electronic marketing literature; and overseeing all activities to enhance marketing, providing input into a marketing activities and website; disseminating information to key customers; bookstores and libraries; reviewing new marketing efforts; offering support to authors and key accounts; representing Adaptive Publishing at academic book fairs and conventions in the US and Canada.

Qualifications and experience

- The candidate must have excellent writing, verbal and interpersonal skills
- College Degree experience and application of design and Photoshop are required
- The successful candidate will have a bachelor's degree and at least 2-3 years' experience in the publishing industry or marketing-related field

Adaptive offers an excellent benefits package and a great working environment. Applications will be accepted until Friday, February 18th.

To apply, please send a cover letter, resume and salary requirements to:
Human Resources, Adaptive Publishing Company
Email: marketing@adaptive.com

Adaptive is an Equal Opportunity Employer. M/F/V/D/V

ASHGATE

www.ashgate.com

Innkeeper

MTAIN LODGE STATE PARK

Vermont State Parks is hiring two full-time, seasonal innkeepers for 18 month positions at one of Vermont's most unique state parks: Mount Mansfield State Park in Vergennes. The innkeepers will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the historic Mount Mansfield Inn.

Seeking responsible and creative individuals, a couple, or close companions to live and manage operations there cater to the following: wedding/golfing seasons, small group functions, dining and overnight lodging. Minimum qualifications: Two to three years' experience in hotel/tourism, restaurant, or job/education management, or a related leisure/travel service field. Positions begin in April 2012.

Visit www.statelodges.com for information

Send application to:
Park Regional Manager,
Five Perry St., Suite 30, Barre, VT 05644,
or email barre@stateparks.com.
Deadline: February 9, 2012





VERMONT ADULT LEARNING

www.vtadulthoodlearning.org

Adult Learning in Vermont

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Colechester Full Time—40 hours per week

Vermont Adult Learning, a nonprofit statewide provider of adult education and literacy services, seeks an organized and outgoing individual to provide administrative assistance at the Learning Center located in Colechester, VT.

This full-time position offers excellent benefits, including medical, dental, retirement, long-term disability, life insurance and generous flexible paid time off.

Visit our web site: www.vtadulthoodlearning.org for more information.

Resumes Due: February 11, 2011

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Project Manager/ Producer



Come join our expanding Marketing Team! We have a full-time opening for a Project Manager/Producer based in Montpelier, VT. There may be flexibility to work from a Burlington location. This position is responsible for the complete lifecycle of online and offline projects from development to delivery. This includes working with key stakeholders on projects, managing resources, budget tracking and analysis of projects. This PM/Producer will work closely with the Director of Integrated Services and other key stakeholders to understand scope of project and ensure delivery based on business requirements.

The successful candidate must have prior interactive/digital media & traditional agency experience. 3+ years of interactive project management experience. Comprehensive knowledge of interactive/Internet communications projects. Solid experience of successfully developing projects from start to finish. Strong interpersonal skills and ability to be a leader in high pressure situations. Basic understanding of various web languages. Ability to create basic wireframes and a strong web and technical knowledge & capacity to stay ahead of the technology curve. Bachelor's degree preferred.

Cabo offers a competitive starting salary and excellent benefits package. Please send resume and cover letter to:

Hansen Resources Department
Cabo Creamery
One Horse Farm Way
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone: (802) 563-3892
Fax: (802) 563-2173
Email: jobs@cabocheese.com
EOE M/F/V



Join Us As
We Continue To Grow

Family Time Coaches

FULL TIME

Join our team as a Family Time Coach. We are seeking a full-time Family Time Coach to join our team in Burlington, VT.

Family Time Coaching is a ground breaking practice providing parenting support and education to families working with BCT. Coaches receive extensive training and gain an excellent income. We will provide clinical and administrative support, in workplace certification.

Requirements: Experience working with high risk children and families, knowledge of child development and facilitator skills preferred. Graduate educationally applicable to be trained. Interested candidates please email your resume to: recruitment@familytime.org or fax: 802-423-3466.

www.familytimevt.org



More and more magazines
look to PART TIME PT
advertising salesperson

Sales experience and knowledge of the advertising industry is a must. Strong interpersonal skills and high level of interest in advertising. We offer flexible hours and the ability to work from home.

Send resume to:
recruitment@vermontsports.com
16 High St
Chittenden, VT 05203

Licensed
Psychotherapist
Space available in well established practice in Burlington watershed. Sublet is an option. Parking included.
Contact: Cheryl@cheryltherapy.com
802-651-7008



RECREATION COORDINATOR

BURLINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION

This position is responsible for the planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling and evaluation of recreational services. The degree with specialization in Community Recreation services or closely related field required. Two yrs. exp. as supervisor/administrator of Recreational Services required. Must be able to obtain and maintain a CPR or a CFA certification. For a complete job description, or to apply visit our website: www.burlingtonvt.com

If interested, send resume, cover letter and City of Burlington application by February 10, 2011 to: **Hansen Resources, 131 Church Street, Floor 2, Burlington, VT 05401**

Women, minorities and persons with disabilities are highly encouraged to apply EOE

WEB DEVELOPER

Joining Network engages and grows the membership communities of Jewish organizations by creating interactive, easy-to-update communication tools with engaging interactive tools and vibrant on-line content. Our members include synagogues, schools, JCCs, Federations, camps, Hillels and other Jewish life groups.

We are seeking an experienced .NET web developer with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, Engineering, Physics, Mathematics or related discipline, 3-5 years' experience in web development using the .NET 4.0 framework, advanced HTML/CSS/XSL skills, competency in Windows Server - IIS/MS SQL Server, Active Directory, and Microsoft/Oracle/IBM or a CMS experience helpful.

For more information visit:
www.jewishnetwork.com/careers



Energy Efficiency Engineer and Technology Consultant

Burlington, VT

Energy Consulting seeks an experienced individual to join our energy efficiency consulting practice in Burlington, VT. This individual will perform a wide range of activities including energy audits, modeling, research and technical analysis, modeling and energy conservation (envelope or life cycle) work in residential and commercial settings, net energy efficiency program and policy planning and evaluation. Qualified candidates will have strong interest in energy efficiency, ability to multitask and a BS in engineering (preferably mechanical or electrical) with 4 years of relevant experience as a modeler, with at least 2 years of relevant experience. Candidates with MS and relevant experience a plus.

Please send resume, cover letter and three references to us by email at: energyconsulting.com with "Vacancy" in the subject line and attaching PDF of www.energyconsulting.com/employment/employment.html

Centerpoint

Administrative
Services

Centerpoint is seeking an Administrative Assistant

Our new Administrative Assistant will provide front-end reception and support in a busy, mental health substance abuse and spiritual education office serving teens and families. As a "first face" for the many of our clients, our Administrative Assistant will be welcoming, responsive, engaged, and attentive, and have an eye toward the possibilities in the lives of our clients, rather than simply behind the challenges.

Our Administrative Assistant will also assist in strategic multiple responsibilities within their workweek and occasionally will engage large numbers of our extended care clients, intermediate residential groups, and family in services offered or playing a role to improve the lives of our families and the health of our community.

And, our Administrative Assistant is skilled with technology. Access and easily learn a variety of software packages. is able to manage and track data, records files, resources and health information in an efficient manner. This experience is a must for our clients health setting and our business.

Other description matches you see you should be a part of it. Then, please send a letter highlighting your skills and interests, along with your resume to:

humanresources@centerpointadmservices.org

Centerpoint offers a variety of employment opportunities for clients and staff with a range of educational and clinical interests. Our positions include competitive salary, comprehensive benefits package, a structured shift team, ongoing professional development, and dynamic work with passion and fun!

Working for mental health substance abuse and spiritual education needs of Vermont teens and their families.



Employing details that change the world

Seeking a person with a quality disposition? Consider The University of Vermont, a world-class and diverse workplace. Offer an comprehensive benefit package (including flexible insurance for dependent full-time positions). This opening and others are updated daily.

Solid Waste Specialist - Physical Plant - #234216 Collect and haul recyclable materials, solar and wind as property at all University locations and identify and report to maintain the appropriate disposal methods. To consider details and report equipment and perform approved waste reduction services. Prospects work plan that encourage safety within the shop and in the field. May appreciate work-related data using appropriate desktop applications. Openness University vehicle. Works under the supervision of Solid Waste Management Supervisor.

High school diploma and up to 1 year of experience in waste collection or recycling operations. Character: solid, honest. Driven. Customer. Supervisor is driving and maintaining large truck in congested areas. Must be physically able to move or roll heavy containers up to 320 lbs and able to work in all no-lying conditions. Ability to lift 30 lbs. Ability to read basic written instructions and full written work orders and forms. Effective interpersonal communication skills. Ability to work occasional overtime on weekends or during busy periods.

For further information on this position and other campus positions, or to apply online, please visit our website at www.uvm.edu/jobs. Review uvm.edu/jobs, telephone uvm.edu/jobs. Applications are not accepted for positions electronically. Paper resumes are not accepted. Job positions are updated daily.

The University of Vermont is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. Applications from women and people from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds are encouraged.



PARTS MANAGER

Howard P. Fairfield LLC
one of New England's leading suppliers of specialty medical equipment, is seeking a dedicated, hard working parts manager for its Mansfield, VT facility. Duties include working on internal and external customers, handling orders, receiving, monitoring and placing stock orders, making customer visits and pick-ups, inventory control and shipping and receiving.

This position requires the ability to multitask, as well as excellent customer service and computer skills. HPM's experience is a plus!

If you are a dynamic individual who is self-motivated and committed to responding to customer needs, please bring your resume and tag by the office located at Wilson Ave. in Mansfield or send your letter and resume to:

Howard P. Fairfield LLC
Attn: Human Resources Manager
PO Box 188
Shelburne, VT 05476
hpmanfield@hpfairfield.com

1961 - 2011
60 Years of Service

Media Solutions International

Project Manager Full-time

- Manage marketing projects from A-Z
- Meet deadlines & exceed expectations
- Expand your comfort zone



For more information and to
apply online visit: www.msimedia.net

BUSINESS MANAGER

Odessa Southwest Supervisory Union is seeking a Business Manager to hire, organize, supervise and direct the fiscal and business affairs of our multiple school districts. Responsibilities will include, but not be limited to: preparing and monitoring school budgets, working hands on categorical programs with respect to how the funds can be used, creating efficient systems within the business office to answer questions, working with others to monitor budgets, technology business applications, and communicating clearly through both written and oral presentation. The applicant should possess a depth and profound knowledge of financial accounting (year management, state and federal reporting requirements). It is preferred that the applicant have up-to-date knowledge of Vermont School Accounting program, procedures and workflow. Knowledge of special education services for development a advantage.

The Business Manager will oversee financial staff and act as an expert in all general areas of financial planning, budgeting and decision making, as well as provide accurate financial reporting and analysis. The Business Manager will have oversight of construction and food service programs. This is a full-time position for a three-year term.

JOB REQUIREMENTS: A bachelor's degree with a major in accounting, finance or business administration. A minimum of two years' relevant experience preferred.

SALARY: \$39,000 to \$45,000

TO APPLY: Send a personal letter of application, current resume, and a minimum of four unexpired letters of reference to: **Wendy Gaynes, HR Coordinator, Odessa Southwest Supervisory Union, PO Box 136, Hardwick, VT 05743, or email: wgaynes@oswus.org.**

Included with your packet, please respond to the questions below:

1) What are the major economic challenges and opportunities that face public education today? What are some practical solutions that you would bring to the position?

2) Please describe your personality and the positive team-related skills that you would bring to the job.

The position offered employment must complete the criminal records process.

EEOE



**VERMONT
COMMUNITY
LOAN FUND**

Director of Finance and Administration

The Vermont Community Loan Fund, a nonprofit financial institution, is recruiting a financial professional to help us meet our goal of providing economic and housing opportunities to low- and moderate-income Vermonters. This full-time employee will be a key member of senior management, involved in both strategic and tactical decision making.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate expertise in most or all of the following: financial planning, cash management, budgeting, accounting, policy development and implementation, organizational leadership, staff supervision, human resources management and information systems management. Knowledge of nonprofit fund accounting is highly beneficial. The successful applicant will be able to demonstrate a commitment to social and economic justice. A complete job description can be found at www.vclf.org.

Send cover letter, resume and salary requirements to hr@vclf.org.
VCLF IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

PROGRAM MANAGER

Grounds for Health is a Vermont-based, nonmedical, women's health organization, seeking experienced program manager for our cervical-cancer prevention programs in Africa and Latin America. Must have Spanish language skills, management and assessment of experience and a desire to travel. Join us and our partners in the specialty coffee industry in this exciting, leading-edge project. Salary DOE 25-30% travel.

Visit www.groundsforhealth.org to learn more.

Send letter and resume by February 15 to
info@groundsforhealth.org



We help women find health
and life in their communities.

Manager of Corporate Partnerships

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) seeks a committed professional to manage a growing number of corporate partnerships. The manager's duties include identifying, building and maintaining corporate partnerships, raising ISC's profile at relevant conferences and events, writing case studies and success stories, presentation of funding proposals and reports, proposal management, research and participation in strategic and operational planning within the institutional environment.

See www.iscvt.org/who-we-are/who-we-are/for-completed-donors for complete description and application details.



**institute for
Sustainable
Communities**

ISC is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Project Architect

Continued Build the Future - Vision and Creativity

Broad Leaf Corporation, Vermont's integrated company of architect, planner, and landscape architect is seeking a Project Architect to join its highly successful and award-winning design team. We are looking for Architects with strong design portfolios, the ability to thrive in fast-paced and collaborative environments. We want people who enjoy working at a busy business and are interested in the design build approach.

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Slice of Life WILLIAMS

a simple yet sophisticated piece. The party ends, promising to follow up with fabric overlays.

"Sometimes people are very forthright and know exactly what they want. Other times, they're looking at you to direct them," Williams explains. "I can see why she took the time on this design — more than to bear into the tugging."

Takes out, many brides are looking for the same theme, anyway. "In the 'lily' yard call it 'shabby chic,'" Williams says, "but here it's called 'rustic elegance'" — probably because most Vermont towns take place in barns. Clients want to incorporate natural elements into their cakes, and that's one reason Williams has become rather

Williams says, "Dessert seems to be one of those things everybody thinks they can make."

I appear I'm just such a person. A few days later, I wander through a craft store, my heart still set on making a beautiful, two-tiered, fondant-covered cake. I wonder if I'm being foolish or simply foolish by testing Williams' theory that complicated cakes would be left to the professionals. But whatever. Even though all I did was play around with some gum paste, I'm happy I've absorbed some handy tricks of the trade from my day at WGS.

It feels wrong to be grocery shopping at Michael's. While it's making my own buttercream, I decide to shell out for

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good at creating a high-contrast effect with buttercream and chocolate shavings. Along with red velvet cake, it's one of the most popular requests she's had for the upcoming year.

The rest of the afternoon, however, is devoted to cake design with a winter theme. Williams is working on a display cake for a Vermont Wedding Salon photo shoot, and she's already rolled narrow strips of white gum paste into swirl spirals, creating snowflakes with a quilling effect. It looks stunning but even she admits it's a tedious process.

Under Williams' instruction, I try to wrap strips of the gum paste — a stiffer form of fondant that dries hard — around a twig, but the stuff quickly becomes brittle and cracks. My clumsy attempts to smooth it back together yield mishapen little caricatures. After 10 minutes with no improvement, I give up.

"One of the weird things about what we do is that it's art, but it's edible."

some white fondant (personally, the stuff is \$12 for two pounds). Composed of gelatin, confectioner's sugar, cream and glycerin, it's still a mystery to me.

At home, I open the basket, only to be bowled over by an artificially sweet smell. I instantly nibble a small pinch. The fondant is like Pillsbury frosting out of a can with the texture of Play-Doh. The very last thing I want to do is put it on my homemade cake.

In fact, I have high hopes that this is the best vanilla cake I've ever made. It's moist, delicately sweet and dense enough to stack well. And my vanilla buttercream is silky perfection. For extra creaminess, I whisked fresh vanilla and milk over medium heat until they thickened, before beating them into whipped butter and sugar. I'm tempted to eat it by the spoonful, but instead I take a tip from Williams and pipe a frosting border around the edges of two layers. I'll be well made the

SIDEdishes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41



open until at least the end of February.

Braschi acknowledges that "It's a good idea to renovate and modernize the building," which dates from the 1930s. (It used to stable horses on the ground floor while their riders lunked above.) He'd just like a clearer sense of when

he'll need to close, and for how long. "[Cooking] could be a blessing or a curse," Braschi admits — given that his family has a baby on the way. Meanwhile, the repairs grow hair-raising: where he'll store his tables, chairs and equipment during the months-long renovation. "Now we can take a breather," he says. But he's unsure when, or if, where he'll reopen.

At nearby **CORNER & MAIN**, the kitchen has had a changeup of the general. Chef **ANDREW** left two weeks ago, and soon chef **MARK MCKENNA** has taken his place. The amiable McKenna was too busy during a recent lunch

to talk about his plans. Manager **FRANCISCA BROWN** says the menu will be changing in a few weeks, while the restaurant's hours stay the same. "We're trying to see how all of the pieces of the puzzle come together," she explains.

Patrons of **BAR PAPER** also have encountered a locked door and a glimpse of owner **DAVID LEE**'s hand-built furniture in a state of disassembly. The Old North End eatery closed several weeks ago. Last year his partner, **MAK SAKS**, had been running the restaurant but had "other things come up" that kept pulling him away.

Lee, who's been working in restaurants since his teeny years, has no plans for a replacement venture. He's still busy running **CHINA EXPRESS** down the street while he cleans out ONE Pepper Grille's storefront.

— C.H.

border with a smothered chocolate ganache before stacking and frosting.

I have two 9-inch and two 4-inch rounds, essentially ready to eat — but they look as vanilla as they're going to taste. I sigh and reach for the fondant. After unfolding it out, I enlist my boyfriend's help in lifting and draping the sheet over the cake. Then I work quickly, trying to smooth it.

But I've put on too much buttercream. As I frantically try to pat over the messy wrinkles in the fondant, the frosting starts to ooze out the bottom, giving my cake a weebly shape.

"You certainly called the "rustic" part of "rustic elegance!"

Delivered, I shove it all in the fridge and leave it overnight.

The next day, with newfound resolution or perhaps wild abandon, I decide to cover the wrinkles with a wide rim dust ribbon around the bottom of each layer. Now that the cake is cold and hard, applying the fondant is much easier. I slip it on.

At some point, I realize I've entered the realm of baking, and am just doing

arts and crafts. The thing I'm working on doesn't even seem edible. I fill two party bags with decorative icing, tinted light green and aqua, and begin to embellish the white surface with the viscous spirals and flourishes that I usually dole out as scrap paper. That ... doesn't look bad, actually. In fact, I do so much intricate piping that it essentially hides my fondant fines. I end up with a slightly kyoskied work of art — nothing as lovely or polished as fond first in a cake shop, but I'm proud nonetheless.

Eating it is a total afterthought. Once my coworkers have raved the cake's top layer the next day, I eat a slice and peel off the fondant. The chocolate ganache nicely accents all the sweet vanilla, but, honestly? I'm not in the mood for cake. I could really go for a salad. ☺

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Capital Fare

The culinary landscape shifts in Montpelier — again

BY ALICE LEVITT

Borin Street is not lap downtown Montpelier. Running parallel to State Street on the river side, the residential neighborhood isn't heavily trafficked, but it is the right place for Salt. With its piles of cookbooks and related wares, the 16-seat restaurant may feel like a visit to the home of a foodie friend — who just happens to be creating fine-hour bistros at home-made prices.

Suzanne Podhizer and Dan Green opened Salt in November, starting with light lunches of savory bread pudding, soups and scones. Podhizer, formerly food editor at Seven Days, and her chef husband have now cut lunch in favor of dinner Tuesday through Sunday.

Talk about coming full circle: Last July, in this paper, Podhizer profiled three Montpelier chefs: Crystal Moderns of Kinross, Matthew Madonia, then of Black Door Bar and Bistro, and Joey Nagg, then of Three Penny Taproom. They were "taking cooperation to a whole new level," she wrote, as they supported each other's efforts to prosper on dating tips.

Less than a year later, everything has changed — except the bold food and the cooperation.

Madonia had left Black Door, which closed its doors after New Year's Eve, and taken Nagg's place at Three Penny Nagg has moved to a new venture of the taproom's owners, the Mad Toss in Waterford, where he whips up his signature Vermont fare for saloon.

As for Madonia, at the end of 2010, she moved 5-year-old Kinross to the very State Street location vacated by last year's big casualty, Restaurant Phoebe. And Podhizer and Green have taken over the empty third slot in the trioson rate. Salt did right into Kinross's former spot at 207 Barre Street.

It may sound like musical chairs, but the players in the capital's changing foodscape all have something in common: creative uses of ultra-local



August 1st



Suzanne Podhizer

ingredients in settings that are far from stodgy fine dining.

If the coverings and goings send a bit incoherence, the restaurateurs say they wouldn't have it any other way. When asked where the Black Door's customers are heading for dinner now, Madonia says that, as local chefs, farmers and producers cooperate more and more, "When I go out, I feel like the town has gotten smaller. I feel like things are sharing."

Podhizer also sees their advantages to food businesses sharing instead of competing. "If people consider [Montpelier] a destination for dining, it benefits everybody," she says.

And she proposes that the cultural shift at work in Montpelier is a microcosm of a larger movement toward more approachable, high-quality food. "We're an open kitchen. This is all part of that shift — sharing recipes with customers, explaining techniques in depth," Podhizer says.

Salt is the antithesis of a restaurant filled with "ghostly, flitting servers and someone in a tall hat," as Podhizer puts it. Starting this week, she'll begin sharing her secrets as weekend cooking classes at the restaurant.

Those who just come for the food will find whatever awaits based on place, event or whatever catches Podhizer and Green's fancy. The current menu: Buttermilk Vermontified takes on Alsatian food. Before

that, it was dishes influenced by Charles Dickson's A Christmas Carol. Next week, the three-week cycle will begin again with Italian small plates. Podhizer says upcoming menus will include a Shakespeare-themed dinner, raspberry sorbet and other prices inspired dishes for the Purple Owl's birthday.

The themed menus aren't just attention getters — Podhizer sees them as a way to work around the limitations of Vermont's winter produce, which she knows all too well as a critic. "I think it's easy to fall into a cuisine rut where everything is order better," she says. "We decided to let each menu have some outer inspiration to focus us to try new recipes and techniques and use Vermont ingredients in all kinds of different ways."

On the Alsatian menu, the most prevalent product is pork, which hails from three different local farms. The standout dish is a plate of extra-large, perfectly al dente nitish filled with a mix of pork liver and sausage. Sausage means sauce brings out the slightly gamey flavor of the meat, but also subdues and sweetens it. Tender chard adds nutrition, but goes down easily in the decadent dish.

The chocolatey garnish, with a hint of mild aniseed made from Blackfoot Root Farm's aniseed, includes dark, house-smoked pork back from Jericho

Setters Farm, juicy limited shoulder from Maple Wad Farm, and sweetly garlic-fennel and red-pepper-fused sausage prepared by Peter Colman, owner and proprietor of Vermont Salumi at East Montpelier's Cato Farm. When not processing pork products, Colman jams Podolizer in a jacket-all trades, working the front of the house, and making salads, coffee and dessert.

Pod is showcased yet again this week in an apple tart with crumbly chunks of butterscotch sauce resting on a bed of white wine-fennel, caramelized onion. Suk is expecting its most retail license any exhibit, says Podolizer, who plans to sell Colman's from sausages alongside her own house-crankled cuts in flavors including blood sausage, beef, lamb and smoked paprika.

To get down to a sober road, chewy, crusty bread arrives at the beginning of each meal with sautéed, smoked Vermont Butter & Cheese Company butter and a trio of salts. Diners are encouraged to try some of each, and judge the difference between salts from Maine and the Himalayas and the house-smoked kind.

Podolizer makes the desserts, including an almond-packed, financier with amaretto-plantain sauce. The sweet varieties in the pass give the illusion of a honey-filled dessert with only a hint involved. More of a "salt and fat myth" herself, Podolizer says she has been surprised to find herself enjoying her de facto role as pastry chef — also and Green is also providing guidance to the Savvy Theater musicians. "There's this really visceral reaction to sweet things you had as a child, perhaps," Podolizer guesses. "I think part of the reason I've enjoyed it so much is it makes people so happy!"

Down on Main Street, Bilodera has also gotten an education since she started at Three Penny Taproom on January 16. The chef says that before joining the taproom team, he was far from a beer aficionado. However, with the guidance of owners Matt McCarthy, Scott Kerner and Wes Hamilton, he's learning not just to pair his food with beers, but to cook with them. "The whole idea is these guys get so much effort to getting the world's finest beers, I have to make food to match them," he says.

On a first look at last week's list week, Three Penny isn't as different from any other watering hole. A few older gentlemen were a hour or there, watching ESPN. Then one of them pages up, "If I'm drunk on Scotch and I hear Matt's Reggae, I will cry!"

It's Montpelier, all right, where even the burlesque have a certain quirky sophistication.

Bilodera's focus is on using the moment local produce, so he changes his menu daily. The current soup of the day is actually a heavy mash of potato pudding, bolstered with pork fat, onion and Sauternes (the Brown Dog: Amap the sweet and meaty-tasting pieces are ribbons of fatty pork that melt with each bite).

Amable Bilodera, who stands at the bar, excellently patchwork dish with shrew. Creamy, fiery Danish-style chicken liver plate is sweetened with Flag Hill Farm's Pomme de Vie apple brandy. McCarthy recommends washing it down with North Coast Brewing Company's Scrumpy Pilsner, a refreshing, light counterpoint to the dish's more earthy flavors of the liver.

Cured pork joints are lightly spiced and served with pickled prunes. The

EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED — EXCEPT THE BOLD FOOD AND THE COOPERATION.

accompanying Anchor Porter, with its chocolate finish, is an ideal match for the preserved plums.

Three Penny's kitchen is limited to a hot plate, toaster oven, pressure pot and half a sous-chef. But, as he prepares dishes, Bilodera says he hasn't felt challenged by his new digs. "I've had more fun here than I have in quite some time," he admits. "I deliver the food and answer questions, I do my own dishes. It has a lot of the same personal feel of a dinner party."

Life Podolizer, Bilodera says his cuisine is heavily based on Vermont's natural assets. His preference to make everything from scratch rather than using out-of-state products such as olives and almonds, previously staples at Three Penny. While barely researching foods that pair well with beers, Bilodera has also learned about his part of Vermont food history, he says. Why back when, she envisions it is best qualified "it as a foodstuff in its own right. Wildflower now has plans to grow down on old-time preloved bread made from a starter of hops.

food

On State Street, Madras also has baked goods on her mind. She's just hired a full-time pastry chef to make all of Kerner's bread from scratch, enabling her to rival Three Penny and Suk as a spot for handcrafted fare.

The from-scratch approach makes sense in Kerner's new location here, as it has a California cool vibe, complete with chandeliers. But that doesn't stop guests from sitting on the couch with a copy of Seven Days and a martini, sipping gluten-free gin and tonics, or bringing small children to enjoy the organic green eggs on toast.

Even a deceptively simple veggie pizza is filled with all-local from Montpelier, roasted tomatoes, sweet caramelized onions and house-made olive tapenade. The bread is delightfully soft and chewy, with a crisp crust.

Newly added drink is more ambitious, and Madras believes a diverse clientele has come with it. "I feel like a lot more twenty-somethings and young families have come back and turned their parents on to [beer] — that 50-and-up Black Beer crowd," she says.

To match her more upscale clientele, Kerner is now offering a dinner menu that includes short ribs braised in Argentinian Malbec with baby winter veggie — even main-dish-sized artichokes. If diners are shocked by fish meat dishes at a restaurant so strongly associated with vegetarian fare, they needn't fear. Everything on the menu can be prepared gluten-free or vegan.

Kerner also has a newly heating bar scene with local options, as well as organic and gluten-free sips. There are plenty of alcohol-free cocktails, including creative martinis.

It's all in the spirit of inclusion and openness that seems to sum up the current capital during scene. Podolizer credits the city's residents with enabling his food to thrive. "This is a town where a lot of people know where food comes from, how it's prepared. That's allowing some really neat things to happen," she says.

There was a time when adventurous Vermont diners had to head to Burlington, Boston, perhaps Bilodera speaks for Montpelierians when he says, "I have no interest in going anywhere else." ☐

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— Bruce Miller, *Washington*

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25 | MUSIC

Some Kind of Wonderful

Talk about transparency: While many musicians remain tight-lipped about the real-life circumstances behind their tunes, San Francisco-based David Berkeley could write a book about them. Actually, he did. Thirteen songs in the soon-to-be-released *140 Doors* and a Gentar capture Berkeley's reputation for each song on his new album, *Some Kind of Cure*. But you don't have to study up on the short stories to make sense of his concert at Vermont's River Arts Center this Saturday; word has it the crochelaar is equally forthcoming in person, setting up each indie-folk number with a tale. With themes of brotherhood, love and longing, these are "songs to swoon by" writes Rolling Stone.

DAVID BERKELEY

Saturday, February 5, 5-7 p.m., at River Arts Center in Montpelier, \$10. Info: www.riverarts.org



24 & 5 | FAIRS & FESTIVALS

A Wintry Mix

If ever there's a winter weekend to spend in the Queen City, this is it. Brrrr the cold — hey it's no -30° — for the 19th annual Burlington Winter Festival. It starts with the 2011 Vermont Snow Sculpting Competition, where frosty works of art spring to life. Last year's throwdown featured everything from a mini-replica of the Eiffel Tower to a party of penguins. Folks check 'em out and vote for their favorite at Saturday's Church Street Ice Walk. Meanwhile, sladdng, snowshoeing, dogsled rides and ice skating await at the waterfront — as do peripheral events such as the Penguin Plunge, the Burlington Parks & Recreation Family Activity Expo at ECHO; and the Kids Y! Camp & School Fair at the Hilton. Top it off with the Young Tradition Showcase and Family Contra & International Dance at Burlington City Hall Auditorium.

BURLINGTON WINTER FESTIVAL

Friday, February 4, 5-8 p.m., and Saturday, February 5, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at various downtown locations in Burlington. Various prices. \$1 for Brokaw button. Info: 300-6249 or 604-0323. burlingtonwinterfestival.com or enjoyburlington.com

One of last year's Church Street Ice Walks

27 | WORDS

Neverending Story

Words regularly spring to life on stage, but this week's "The Art of the Storyteller" delves into the nitty-gritty of ourselves like never before. Filmmaker, actor, playwright and Northern Stage producing director Catherine Doherty sits down with bestselling author and Hanover, N.H., resident Jack Perloff (pictured) for a conversation about structure, voice, dialogue, the publishing world and, really, whatever else comes up. Perhaps Perloff's reaction to Hollywood's alternative ending for *My Sister's Keeper*, or why she chose to write for the "Wonder Woman" comic-book series. It's "incredibly exciting" and "very different" from her novel's book tours," says Doherty, noting that Perloff "comes to see [Northern Stage] shows on a regular basis." Write on.

THE ART OF THE STORYTELLER

Monday, February 7, 7:30 p.m., at Regan Opera House in White River Junction. \$10-35. Perloff's book: *Neverending Story*. Info: 286-1530. northernstage.org



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music

Since missing it a small gathering for black old-time musicians in 2005, the Carolina Chocolate Drops have become one of the most successful young string bands in the country. The North Carolina-based trio, mentored by legendary fiddler Joe Thompson, draws on a rich yet largely underappreciated component of America's old-time music: black string bands. Infusing an appreciation for tradition with modern sensibilities and techniques, the Carolina Chocolate Drops represent something deeper than mere revivalism. They represent a racial, cultural evolution.

Seven Days caught up with Chocolate Drops' bongo player Dom Flemons by phone in advance of the band's upcoming gig at the Barre Opera House on Saturday, February 5.

SEVEN DAYS: Was it surprising for you to learn that there was such a rich history of black string-band music? **DOM FLEMONS:** Oh, absolutely. We all had some sort of notion about it when we came to the North Carolina Gathering in 2005. But, for the most part, it was just kind of a gradual thing that we all learned about. We didn't really know about any of this music either, just like anybody else. And even as we've played, we're still learning more about it, too.

SD: Given that traditional music has been steadily growing in popularity, why is it only recently that people are developing an interest in black old-time?

DF: The string-band music and country music that's been popular, that's the easy stuff to get into. It's like, if you got into '60s rock, the Beatles are the first thing you're going to come up with. But then you can get into other bands like the Beatles or the Hollies, but that's not going to be what happens first.

SD: If you were to listen to black string-band music in a vacuum, what would be the stylistic and thematic differences from what most people associate with old-time?

DF: It matters who you're talking about. It's very much a Southern thing, but also was a function of where the music was [made] in the Southern culture. And that's true with both black and white string-band music.

SD: So it's geographically specific? **DF:** There's more rural stuff and there's stuff that's more urban. Like, the Grand Ole Opry is an urbanized version of



Black and Blues

Checking in with the Carolina Chocolate Drops' Dom Flemons

BY DAN ROLLES

hillbilly music. So, what happened was that people were coming from the outer reaches of Nashville, from the country, into Nashville to play the music. Then, that was broadcast outside of Nashville. And even those guys, they knew a lot of black string bands growing up in the country parts of middle Tennessee.

But the black string bands were very different because they evolved into blues bands and jazz bands... you find examples of those, too. Like, Jim and Andrew Acosta, for example. They have a very urban sound, and they were from a part of Georgia where there was a more urban and cleaner sound. That's where the folks who were recorded in the field, not on a commercial record.

SD: And what were the stylistic differences there?

DF: The more rural sound is often a more syncopated sound. The fiddle tends to have a different roll. It's almost like funk bass, where it's really, really wild and syncopated, while the fiddle is holding down the time. Other times the black string-band sounds just like white string bands, which is one of the reasons it never really caught on — it wasn't different enough. The public at the time wanted to hear the bluer music done by black people, not the white-derived music from black people.

The same thing happened with religious music: People drifted away from the white-derived black spirituals, and gospel became the thing after that because it was a blacker form of expression.

SD: So, it's sort of like the difference between Motown and Stax, where one was a more polished, groomed sound and the other a grittier, more natural type of soul music.

DF: That's right. And you can see the differences there, culturally. In Detroit and Memphis, you have two different sets of people and two different audiences and different music communities happening. That music is totally a very good comparison with how black string bands worked.

SD: Traditional music seems to be experiencing something of a youth movement, both in terms of drawing younger fans, and younger bands starting to explore the genre and take it in new directions. Why is it resonating with youth culture more now?

DF: I think the interest has always been there. But I think it's different enough from the popular music that people are hearing that they're drawn to it and want to try it out. I mean, it's not rock or techno to play old-time music. It's very simple. Some people go at it with a punk aesthetic, where it's simple and you can just walk away on it and play as hard as you can, which is good enough in itself. But there are more outlets now, too, especially fiddle. And there are records like *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, *Ghost World* and a movie that inspired us, *Lone Star*. Even things like Johnny Cash's *American Recordings*, Tom Waits' *Do It Yourself* and more on Mike Vitarone — those sort of things have permeated

and started changing the prices of the guitars to make it something new.

SD: So it's evolution.

DF: Right. The Carolina Chocolate Drops, we're going to end up like the first rock and roll singers, where we're kind of older to these younger kids wanting to play old-time music. Too late, you see Chuck Berry and Bill Haley... they're not young people. Those people were doing other types of music and hitting middle age when they were playing for younger people. Then the younger people take it somewhere else — Buddy Holly, or anybody on Sun Records.

SD: You mentioned a 'punk aesthetic.' Do you see parallels between folk music and genres like punk and hip-hop?

DF: Absolutely. And you mentioned hip-hop — people haven't delved into that aspect too much, yet, which I'm really writing on. I can't wait to see somebody else do it. The idea in my head is to have a country blues album and have hip-hop artists do it, but do it pretty straight. Can La Ghetto's new song, "I'm a Star," that could work. Or even "Thyrrone" by Janelle Monáe, you could make that into a string-band number. There are parallels all over the place. ☺

▶ This column's founding spirit, producer Dan ROLLES, is currently on tour with his band, the ROLLES, and is at the www.rolles.com.

SOUND**bites**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 63

Nectar's Loveland is coming off quite a year in 2010, prominently highlighted by getting hitched to local musical stars **WYRON JONES**. She knows a thing or two about songwriter stardom herself, having hosted them regularly at a number of local clubs over the years. Her husband near here has been taking notice, as he's lined up an impressive roster of talent: First up this week, **ANDREW PARKER, BENJIE AND MARTIN SMITH**. Future seasons will include Loudway's Mike Clifford, **WAYLON SPEED'S** KELLY KAYIN, **JACK CLIFTON** and **STRETCHIN' BURNING' GRASSHOPPERS**, among others. Check it out every Saturday in February.

Band Name of the Week:
BUNCH VIBRAL GUYFARER. Love the name, not as psyched about the funky jams that are far as I know, these guys are the best band ever to come out of Potomac. Yr OK, they might be the only band from Potomac, but still. Everybody has to start somewhere, right? They'll be at Radio Bar this Friday.

Speaking of the Beer, the Friday local drink-hup propagators **HANDEDLY PRODUCTIONS** following a year of well-

received rotation gigs at Montpelier late last year, reintroduce themselves to the city they called home at the early part of the century. Welcome back, guys.

Most folks probably know **DOH SHEDDEN** as the man behind the annual Valley Stage Festival in Huntington. Sheldon has helmed the small outdoor fest for the past five summers, scoring such notable acts as the **GREENBOWS**, **HAVE A HEAT** and **DAVEY HARRISON**, **THE DUBS**, **ANNE HOFMEIER**, and **ROBBIE PULAK**, among many others of local and national renown. Not content to only play his trade during the three- and-a-half warm weeks we call summer, Sheldon has been chomping out under the banner of Valley Stage Productions, and partnering with area clubs to present shows similar to both sound and spirit to his main event. The first such gig is this Thursday at the Higher Ground Sharehouse Lounge with Valley Stage vets the **GRASSHOPPERS** and local whiskey-grass band **SHRUB ARBOR** next. By the way, if the former band sounds familiar, it may be because I mention the Brooklyn-based

punk grass outfit almost every time they're in the area, solely because they were my all time favorite. PR gap: "Take 'Hill-Hill' on cassette!" Picture VSP shows include **THE MUCKIN' MONKS** and **THE ONE**. **HIGHGROUND IS HERE**.



With at: Higher Ground

Welcome back, **BAND OF THIEVES**. The young rock outfit is back on stage and also seeking its fortune for a time on the left coast. They're returned home to work as a new record and make tour plans for the summer. They'll be at Club

Motomove this Thursday with **LA HARMON** and local funky beach **REAGUARDIAN**.

And finally, I'll leave you with a nod to... Who is red and white — him, really, really white —

— Jan 31

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WITH **THE MUCKIN' MONKS**

FRIDAY FEB. 12 8 PM

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Listening In

Once again, this month's top vinyl releases are featured, in which there's a special sampling of what was going on in the past, CD, vinyl, or book proper. No, this month.

By Greg A. Miller

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Griffin Davis
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CLUB DATES

WANTABLE, ALAN, AND MONTAGNE



PIE OR SAT ON (Y THE MOLES) (AMERICAN)

Molenes, Molenes, Molenes, Moleeeeeees

General Molene's two Molene's have been turning up both 68 Truckin' American Roots and Acropolis Molene's American Roots - two of the more reliable resources for heavy fooding. A little bit of history, a little bit of rock and roll, the hard rock, the heavy band of country, 20 country and rockabilly that runs over the molene's (the) as a one-hour dinner just folk. This week the band plays a pair of VT dates. Friday, February 4, at Netter's with MONTAGNE, and Saturday, February 5, at Montagne's Langdon Street Cafe.

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GREEN MOUNTAIN TAVERN - 10-11 PM 10-11 PM 10-11 PM 10-11 PM

LANDON STREET CAFE - 10-11 PM 10-11 PM 10-11 PM 10-11 PM

PURPLE MOON PUB - 10-11 PM 10-11 PM 10-11 PM 10-11 PM

THE BERRON RESTAURANT & TAP ROOM - 10-11 PM 10-11 PM 10-11 PM 10-11 PM

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ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

SOURCE: JEFFREY

REVIEW *this*



Pariah Beat, *Bury Me Not*

PARIAH BEAT CD

In music criticism, we talk a great deal about influences. In most cases, it's an attempt to describe music in universally reliable terms. For example, if I tell you so-and-so clearly listens to a lot of Bob Dylan, you immediately understand some basic characteristics of said artist's music without ever hearing it. It's an imperfect analogy, but for our purposes it works, mostly. But what if we could boil down the various and disparate pieces that make an album and divine some elemental approximation of its building blocks? Better yet, what if we could concretely do it for us?

Studded with the subhead "Americana" tag, The Lord's Pariah Beat have longstrided in a genre-jumping melange of rowdy twang. Their debut full-length, *Pariah Beat Radio*, was a raucous and, at times, schizophrenic exploration of roots, country rockabilly and any number of other "red-winey" 'n' 'blues. However, their sophomore full-length, *Bury Me Not*, reveals a more purposeful approach. Its discourses presumably involving copious amounts of whiskey and vinyl records, songwriters Nick Chavik, Billy Shupe and Emily Eastbridge distilled the scope of their influences down to three albums: *By Your Side*, *Gunners*, *Cashmere*, etc., etc., by Dwight Yoakam, and *Gunter Town* by Steve Barak.

From the first notes of the raucous opening title track to the record's soulless balladization, "Fanny Pet," Pariah Beat have crafted a record that bows to reverence to their cowboy-beat clad unity. But the band

transcends mere hero worship, applying members' collective and individual strengths to illustrate what makes Pariah Beat unique.

Shupe's "I Don't Want to Go to Heaven" is a humble, clever song. Williams would likely be proud to have written. Chavik's cheeky, bohemian-traged "Don't Be Jealous," reflects Barak's pointed wit. And Eastbridge's playful "My Ella Strickland" is a booty piece that, at moments, is a vocative of each of the bands' true inspirations while ironically removed from all of them.

Other cuts, such as "1000 Songs" and the cover song "Honky Tons," drive a more direct message, particularly to Barak. Still, with this band seems to influence on its final disc, *Bury Me Not* remains a unique and unpredictable record.

The flow in creating an artist's influences to describe his or her work is that it fails to completely address the merits of the artist in question. Dylan, *you indeed* have inspired our aforementioned friend. But that doesn't mean that, just because you love Highway 61 Revisited, you'd dig our fellow pal. (As recent truth: Dylan has influenced a far greater number of bad songwriters than good ones.) Regardless of our chosen discipline, we use all products of our influences. What matters is how we wield those influences as a reflection of ourselves. With *Bury Me Not*, Pariah Beat have expertly done just that.

Bury Me Not is available at PariahBeat.com.

DAN BOLLER

Wards, Reagen Dead *Wards Alice*

SELF RELEASED CD

"We are the Wards, we play punk." Such is the opening opening salvo from Wards front man Ryan Carley, introducing the latest album from the seminal Burlington punk band, *Reagen Dead Wards Alice*. Like the record itself, it's a straightforward declaration of punk contravenance such as substance or song. And, like each of the band's sporadic releases since 1977, it is aggressively defiantly so. The Wards have cultivated the Gipper, but it appears they still have some words left to go.

Clucking in at exactly one hour, over 24 tracks, *Reagen Dead Wards Alice* "fuck you" is... well, the same shit that ruled the band three decades ago. *Reagen*

Reagen may be dead but, according to Carley and co., his evil legacy lives on. The fits that plagued us then — with poverty, social injustice, yuppies — still do so now. Sadly, bands like the Wards will never run out of things to scream about. But, oh, how they scream.

"I may be old, but I ain't shot down yet," declares Carley at the start of "Shot Down," just as the band explodes in a mantronic of sobbing punk fury. The song is representative of the Wards' ethos as a whole. Guitarists Franco and Glen Alay scorch fanged lines with ragged enthusiasm over rudimentary bass and Nick Lincoln's frantic drums. Meanwhile, Carley scats a subliminally with an unbridled intensity double that of most punks half his age. It's a sloppy, bracing mess — in other words, exactly what punk is supposed to be. Take notes, whippersnappers. *Reagen* features a re-working of the Wards signature anthem "Wagon Factory," originally released in 1984. Though the title's General Electric



plant is no longer in Burlington, time has hardly softened the song's burning impact. When Carley waxes about factory workers for taking office breaks in the midst of building weapons that "destroy the future," it's as poignant — that's right, poignant — now as ever.

In an age when punk rock has been reduced to the antiquarian wailings of adolescent wannabes decked in Rammstein T-shirts from Urban Outfitters, the mere fact that a band like the Wards exists at all is remarkable. That they would still be compelling and relevant 30-plus years after forming in the Queen City is a testament to the enduring power of the genre. Or, perhaps, a sad suggestion that we never quite learned the lesson punk rock was supposed to teach us. At least we still have the Wards.

DAN BOLLER

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JAMES HUNTER



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music

CLUB DATES

UNAVAILABLE, AVAILABLE, UNAVAILABLE

Hi, We're From Brooklyn

There's a certain way — or stigma, depending — surrounding the phrase "Brooklyn band." It evokes images of overgrown, loose urban and shined-of-the-curve style — which, of course, is usually some "retro" variety. Whatever. While the rest of the borough basks in the current haze of innocent psych-rock, **MINIBOONE** rebuts: Cover-of-the-week Japanese minimalist, and deliver lead, fast and healthy-as-fuck rock and roll. And yeah, they're from Brooklyn, but don't hold it against them. **Minibone** play the Mercury Lounge in New Williamsburg, at Winslow on Saturday, February 5. Local radio **WASHDCVILLE** and **PANAMA** open.

SAT. 55 (1 MINIBOONE) (PQ12)



SUNDAY 4 PM

MONTY'S OLD HORN TOWNERS Garage Rocked JAZZ with history. **Monty's Old Horn Towners** (Sat 4pm)

8:30 p.m. Free

RECTOR'S Bob Marley & Co. Day 2. **Rector's** (Sat 4pm)

8:30 p.m. Free

PANAMA (Sat 4pm) **Panama** (Sat 4pm)

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THE BROTHERS (Sat 4pm) **The Brothers** (Sat 4pm)

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Stepping Right Up

"Under the Big Top," "George Rouault: Cirque de L'Etoile Filante" and "Masked Spectacle"

A trio of concurrent exhibits at the Fleming Museum illustrates how visual artists have responded to classic touring performers. "Under the Big Top: The Fine Art of the Circus in America," Georges Rouault: *Cirque de L'Etoile Filante* and "Masked Spectacle, Commedia dell'Arte and Puppet Theater" create a colorful parody of images relating to themes found in popular arts and circuses.

"Masked Spectacle" leads off the show in the museum's Wilbur Bacon. Detailed prints by American/Hungarian artist Giuseppe Penone (1943-1969) focus on masked characters that have appeared in avant-garde European theater and seem to be influenced by Baroque clothing. Penone's "Commedia dell'Arte IV A, 'Il Dottore'" is a lively portrait of a masked performer in character, disorientingly cutting a scene. The exhibit also includes his paper-mâché masks from Vermeer's own *David & Puppet Theater*, among them horned devils, large robes and human-sized "Whitea Glown" masks.

In the East Gallery, Rouault's 1898 suite of 16 engravings with aquatint focuses on a darker aspect of clowning, in this case rendered in the French artist's signature heavy black lines and rich colors. "Madame Lisonier" captures a female clown in a tux, with a masklike face, looking absently off to the right. "Trance De" is a sad, muscular male figure with a haggard countenance. Rouault's bright colors and dark outlines give his prints an appearance of stained glass. These are *exclusively* subdued portrayals; Rouault was more interested in the sad life of clowns than in their artificial, jolly performances.

The most diverse exhibit of the three is "Under the Big Top," which includes early 20th-century 21st-century paintings, prints and drawings, and even a few 19th-century Vermont newspapers advertising the circus. The exhibit's aim is to explore the artists' psychological connection to various circus performers, after all, notes the Fleming's commentary artists, too, "lured by their skill and talent at the edges of society." Burlington artist Lance Rockwell's "Clown" drawing from 1907 captures



THE EXHIBIT'S AIM IS TO EXPLORE THE ARTISTS' PSYCHOLOGICAL CONNECTION TO VARIOUS CIRCUS PERFORMERS.

ates the grotesque and frightening: the face at right is a skull with a pointed hat, while a face crowded against it at left is smeared with makeup and has doll, heavy eyes.

George Bellows' 1912 painting "The Circus" conveys the skill of a female backflip rider standing on a fast-moving wire stallion, while a troupe of acrobats defies gravity overhead. Just known for his passages of lonely matches, the American Ashcan School painter masterfully captures the energy of an audience engrossed in a dramatic

event. Bellows' theatrical light and symmetrical composition are steady and alive with movement.

"Circus Test," by 20th-century painter and illustrator George Luks — also a member of the Ashcan group — is informed by his interest in working class subjects and street scenes. It depicts the outside of a big top tent in the evening as a crowd streams into the show. Luks' style is simple, almost primitive, but his figures seem filled with anticipation as they stride from darkness into the bright world of the spectacle within.

Before moving pictures came along, circus and vaudeville dominated popular culture — and traces of their influence are all around us. In November 2010, large-scale posters from the 1895 "Pennygraph and the Wild West" circus were discovered on the side of a building being demolished in Barre. Unfortunately, they were destroyed. A pop-



Left: "A King of the Airs" by George Rouault. Right: "The Flying Clown" by John Elsworth. (Circus posters by George Rouault.)

ular site met first 1893 posters hidden by clipboard in a Colchester house in 1991. They were salvaged and donated to the Shelburne Museum, which owns a huge collection of circus art and artifacts. The Shelburne mounted "Circus Day in America," a large, history-oriented exhibition last year, which included the conserved Colchester posters.

The Fleming's current exhibit demonstrates the ongoing interest in the circus, and the significance artists have found in its iconography and human elements. Big top acts may be fleeting, but the artistry and drama they engender are timeless.

MARC AMOBY

Under the Big Top: George Rouault's "Masked Spectacle" opens at Fleming Burlington, Vermont (Thursday, February 3, 5-6 p.m. through May 22).

DEAR
YOU

I CAN HEAR YOU
CRACKING YOUR
KNUCKLES FROM THE
OTHER SIDE OF THE
APARTMENT



BOTH OF MY FEET
CAN FIT INTO ONE OF
YOUR SHOES



PRETTY MUCH SINCE THE
FIRST TIME WE GOT
TOGETHER, WE'VE READ
BEFORE BED LIKE AN
OLD COUPLE



WE BOTH CALL THE FISH
BILL, EVEN THOUGH I
NAMED IT
SOMETHING ELSE



MAYBE SOMEDAY
WE'LL LIVE ON
THE BEACH



MAYBE SOMEDAY WE'LL
GET A DOG, OR A
CAT WOULD BE COOL
TOO I GUESS. HE
MIGHT TRY TO EAT
BILL THOUGH.



(DO YOU REALIZE HOW
MUCH PIZZA YOU EAT?
IT'S PRETTY HILARIOUS
HOW MUCH YOU THINK
ABOUT PIZZA.)



LET'S GO
CAMPING IN THE
DESERT.



LET'S GROW
AND CHANGE
TOGETHER.

LET'S GO OUT
TO THE MOVIES.



I LOVE
YOU.



MELISSA MENDES

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ART SHOWS

BURLINGTON AREA ART SHOWS & EVENTS

BRIGHT SPACES Gracely is an interpretation of the world's most famous natural arch (Bixby's Rock) and also includes a great new Watercolor course, a series of water, rock, pencil and charcoal lessons, also an exhibit on watercolors in Glass panels on exhibit on Through March 26 at Long's Mountain Gallery Main Center in Burlington. Info: 802-452-4528

WINTER ARTS FEST Mark by snow on a white exhibit the seasonal effects of snow on the planet. Visit from February 2nd until the end of the festival. Through March 26 at Long's Mountain Gallery Main Center in Burlington. Info: 802-452-4528

BUFF & TUFF: HUNTERIA FOLIO Hunteria Folio's New York Times Times paintings reflecting the beauty of the Kachapungu of the Louisiana. Through February 26 at Papyrus in Burlington. Info: 724-5454

JESSICA HENDER "Beneath the Surface" exhibited her colorful abstract paintings on the watercolor and the colors of the watercolor. Through February 26 at Papyrus in Burlington. Info: 724-5454

BARBARA BERRY THUNDER Watercolor and pencil work on paper by the artist. Through February 26 at The Glass Gallery. Info: 802-452-4528

KEITH KAHN Traditional and modern collages with a focus on the "Landscape" in the "Landscape" and the "Landscape" in the "Landscape". Through February 26 at Papyrus in Burlington. Info: 724-5454

MAIGRET KATIE The group show of the artist's work. Through February 26 at Papyrus in Burlington. Info: 724-5454

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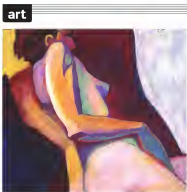
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CENTRAL VERMONT ART SHOWS W/F 20

IDE KARRIGAN "Faded, the Endless Sea" includes contemporary fabric panels to and handpainted by the Vermont painter. Through February 20 at the Contemporary Center 517 Lewis Street in Montpelier info 223-4676

choreography in valley

DAVE VERNEY "Contemporary Choreography: Dance and Photography" images of recent performances by Dance Company of the Valley and the student artist. Opening ceremony by author (dance). Through February 20 at the Montpelier Center for the Arts, Montpelier Valley info 433-6433

EMILY BETH ENOCH "Handcrafted jewelry and mixed glassware by the Vermont artist." Through February 20 at Gallery 502 in Richmond info 434-9434

KATE MUELLER "Color and Curve" pastel and oil paintings that play with shapes from the Vermont. Through February 18 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

DAVE & KATE MUELLER "Heart Throb" watercolor paintings by the Vermont artist. Through February 20 at Gallery 502 in Richmond info 434-9434

northern

ALEX BOTTIGLIONE "Mixed media and enamel on glass in the Vermont artist's studio." Through March 2 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

BETH KERRIDGE "Stained Glass" 2011 oil and glass paintings that play with shapes from the Vermont. Through February 20 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

CHRISTOPHER DAVIS "Vermont, North and South" portraits and landscapes painting. Through February 20 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

ELLEN DEWITT "Portrait photography by the Vermont artist." Through March 2 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

JAMES LUCIANA "Selections from Light and Stone and Water" 2011 oil and glass paintings. Through February 20 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

CENTRAL TO YOUR NEW LIFE



"It has been pretty fantastic. The staff was so wonderful. I would not change a thing!"

And who would want to? Angela Schiaggo and Chris Welsh have a beautiful son. Their 6lb/6oz first born - William Pasquale Schiaggo Welsh - arrived on Sunday, January 23. We visited on Monday and his parents were nearly bursting with joy - marveling at his every perfect feature. Will was sleeping peacefully, completely unfazed by all the commotion and the fact that Mom and Dad wanted to play. We bet that will change once they are settled in at home in Fayston. Best wishes Will - and Mom and Dad! We're betting there's lots of fun in store for all.



Lisa Stancovich, MD, OB-GYN



Kristin Hammond, RN, CN Nurse



Christine Leonard, RN, Lactation Consultant



Rachel Shaw, MD, Pediatrician

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Kate Mueller "The artist's seasonal portrait of a naked woman on its side and you'll find the remarkable curves of a Vermont landscape. Her hips and breasts, as well as the chair's gentle slope, become mountain ranges on the horizon. It's no coincidence. Mueller, who has focused solely on the past nude since the mid-'90s, recently began playing with shapes from the outside world, incorporating them into her portraits. In her show "Color and Curve" at Castleton State College's Christine Price Gallery, the human body becomes an extension of the rolling hills, with all the surprising colors of a sunset. Through February 18. Pictured "Back Story" (left).

LARRY GOLDEN "Winter in the Kingdom: Landscapes and Landscapes" mixed media paintings of landscapes, snow-covered mountains, woods. Through March 2 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

MARC ANDREY "Portraits by the Vermont artist, in the Vermont Gallery." Through August 10 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

MEXY WILSON "It's a Thing Called Vermont" abstract and representational paintings by the Vermont artist. Through April 10 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

JOHN HENRY "Selections of Nature" mixed media and representational paintings by the Vermont artist. Through April 10 at the Vermont Art Center 100 Main Street in Montpelier info 434-9434

ART SHOWS

STEPHEN HERRICK "Words and Images From Martin Luther King, Jr. and King's Response to Stephen Herrick's art exhibit" exhibited by Gary Herrick in Harrisville and exhibited in another late business building where the art was exhibited for King, Jr. Opening power and following to the event. Through February 25 at Stephen Herrick Gallery and Day Chapel in St. Johnsbury. Info: 828-449-0270.

THE JACOB PALMER GROUP'S BLACK ARTS Hosted by members of the local art community, including: LILLIAN DUBOIS (POTTERY), ANN HARTLEY (METAL), MARY PETER (SILVER), JANE DUNN (ART), ANN HARTLEY (METAL) and more in Gallery 1, downtown Harrisville, and in the Harrisville public library. Through March 1 at the Art Center in Harrisville. Info: 828-449-0270.

SAL ROSENBERG & JAMES PETER JENNINGS "Columbus and the past" shown prominently. Regional exhibitions which include: 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, 108th, 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 119th, 120th, 121st, 122nd, 123rd, 124th, 125th, 126th, 127th, 128th, 129th, 130th, 131st, 132nd, 133rd, 134th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 138th, 139th, 140th, 141st, 142nd, 143rd, 144th, 145th, 146th, 147th, 148th, 149th, 150th, 151st, 152nd, 153rd, 154th, 155th, 156th, 157th, 158th, 159th, 160th, 161st, 162nd, 163rd, 164th, 165th, 166th, 167th, 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movies

Another Year ★★★★★

Another Year fills sets that react and most exclusively of elegances — that of those which fill most traditional category at all. The 10th feature from British writer-director Mike Leigh is a pure state of mind.

Over the years, the creator of works such as *As Good as Dead* (1993), *Secrets & Lies* (1996), *Secrets* (1997), *Shame* (1999) and *Happy Feet* (2004) has perfected a process of building movies from the ground up through an airtight collaboration with his cast. The last one example is a semi-improvisational about some study that finds the elements at the peak of his powers.

Two of the characters we study are Tom (Jim Broadbent) and Gwen (Julie Walters), a North Carolina couple who've been happily married for decades. He's an engineering prodigy, starts a mental health counselor. They're good humans, well provided, and to a certain extent, a collection of friends who haven't been so lucky in life.

Lesley Manville has earned award on her remarkable performance as Mary, the couple's most frequent and most troubled guest. A secretary in the clinic

where Gwen works, she's a mini-pulp, motor-mouthed, mess of delusions. In a wonderful early scene, she joins the pair for Saturday night dinner, stops chattering just long enough to take the next up, winds up at bedtime too excited to leave and then, of her hours of babbling about herself, tells Gwen, "You ever see me before? You here for me? I'm a very good listener."

Enter Ken (Peter Wight). Tom's old friend and schoolmate, he's decided to pay a visit. A heart attack is going to happen, he's big bedded them together and always has a drink in his hand. It's not so much that the years haven't been kind to him. They're just skewed by one quickly. He gives the impression of having gone to bed 28 and wakes up at 40.

What are the odds in the Age of the Dysfunctional Family that a film would feature not only a loving husband and wife, but also a foreign son? Oliver Maltman brings just a lot of much to the role of Ken, an Irish kid and lawyer and the object of Mary's cranked romantic fantasies. It hits her hard when one day out of the blue, he brings home Kate (Kerry Fox), the woman he intends to marry like that immediately it



THAT'S SOMETHING ABOUT MEAT: Doves feature prominently in Mike Leigh's moving examination of human emotions

havent been a family this period to be in one brother's company more "The Adventures of Grace and Herbert."

It's against this backdrop of domestic problems that Leigh offers moving riffs and examinations on friendship, family class, aging, dreams, disappointment and death. The film is filled with small details that on reflection contain monumental significance, and they're slipped into some of the most unforgettable performances you'll see this

or any other year. It just may be Mike Leigh's masterpiece.

Another Year is better by far than many of the movies we'll be hearing about on Oscar night. I can't imagine why it wasn't invited to the party. Unless, of course the Academy couldn't agree on what category to nominate it in.

RICK KISONAK

REVIEWS

Rabbit Hole ★★★★★

Rabbit Hole is a heartbreaker. Whether you have young children or not, the loss of one isn't something you want to contemplate. By itself, the film's premise has about as much mass appeal as the support group that bereaved mother Becca (Nicole Kidman) drafts in early on the film. But her loss has the company of other grieving parents as desperate to feel the spike that they'll themselves, "You've made another angel?"

But hold on, because the film isn't just a wallow in vicarious misery. We may hope never to experience what Becca and her husband, Howie (Ryan Reihardt), are experiencing, but most of us know how it feels to have one been decimated by a sudden loss or accident or misstep. (The movie's title refers to the notion of tumbling down Lewis Carroll's rabbit hole — or a physician's wordbook — and finding oneself in an alternate reality.) Most of us are left reeling that makes us ask, as Becca asks her mother (Diane Wiest), "Does it ever go away?" The film's answer is not surprisingly, "Stop." But it offers lovely affirmations that feel surprisingly solid.

Rabbit Hole is easy on the eyes. Julian Jarrold's (Michael) director of *Living and the Angry Bird* and *After the Rain* directs with more restraint than one might expect. He stresses everything that's glossy, lush and vibrant

about the suburban world where the affluent protagonists live, but he does not dwell on its darkness — we know it's here right months since the death of the Carver's 4-year-old son, but not the death.

At first, the film tests our patience by asking us to empathize with people who look well, perfect, happy and generous without a hint of guilt. Kidman could be carrying the *Angry Bird* (again). Given the cold reality, Becca offers everyone — including her husband — she even more strongly calls to mind Mary Tyler Moore's world-weary boss in the ice-cream room in *On the Waterfront* (1999). Like that character, Becca refuses to weep or talk about her son — and she wears her clothes in a *Goodbye to Berlin*.

When she slips in her way imperfect younger sister (Diane Wiest), Becca reveals her what she is — an insecurity-laden character written for the stage. (David Lindsay-Abaire adapted his play of the same name.) When the movie's video clip of their son that Becca watches and remembers on her cell phone, she just seems weak.

But gradually Kidman's presence has two moods, but only the first mood goes deeper and warmer and we begin to understand her. We discover that Becca's son is not a boy (Who her mom says her to just comfort in religion, she calls God a "middle-class" boy).

The tenderness that she desires Howie can't come and when she befriends a teenager (Miles Teller), who played a role in the tragedy, it's a role that plays to Kidman's ambivalent self persona, because she tends to show the camera a child doll, despite when it cracks, we see something real emerge, and these moments feel more

honest.

Rabbit Hole has a few chamber-like and manipulative elements. When Becca deals up a friendship with another grieving parent (Rebecca O'Leary), we know exactly where it's heading and what the writer is telling us.

But where other movies — *Goodbye to Berlin* among them — deliver a big, heavy, emotional catharsis, this one pulls back and stays real. Mitchell allows the actors' performances to deliver the emotional payoff. Hugging a dog (which movie's response to fiction that Becca, Becca tells us, if we need to know



CRIP AND KIDMAN: Becca's company in Mitchell's moving story

about Howie's feelings.

And Wiest has a monologue toward the end that is, as a word, beautiful. Her answer to Becca's question — does the pain ever stop? — means to arrive at the spot of the moment and surprise even her. It's beautiful in the context even with a mood that shouldn't be hopeful but is. "Classics," the *Glossaries* suggest, is a myth. But, for someone whose place and dreams have been voided as an instant, putting one foot in front of the other can be a triumph.

MARGOT HARRISON

MOVIE CLIPS

MOVIEPLAYING KIT

SAINT MARGARET: THE WHY BEYOND Director Michael Carlin tells the story of the transformational journey of a young woman in her documentary (37 min, NR, Rung, ends 4/3)

THE SOCIAL NETWORK A critical (David Fincher) and popular (Kevin Spacey) story of the founding of Facebook. The author is a writer (David Fincher) and director (Kevin Spacey) of the film. (118 min, PG-13, Rung, ends 4/3)

THE LOST CITY The role of the lost city of the Amazon. The story is told through the eyes of a young woman (Jennifer Lawrence) who is the first to discover the city. (118 min, PG-13, Rung, ends 4/3)

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NEW ON VIDEO

CONFESSIONS A young woman tells the story of her life. (118 min, PG-13, Rung, ends 4/3)

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ARIES (March 21-April 19) New and then members of other astrological organizations that I seem to fear you know move them. It's true, but I'm certainly not alone at all, as far as I know. I can't let the signs equity. I tell you this: remember that the astrologers of my own generation (I have been working for years to get more solid at expecting questions that your title tends to exist at being direct, acting towards knowing exactly what you need, including a willingness to change and evolving by example. All these needs are especially needed by the people in your life right now.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) I've heard that even when people are successful at doing their very most intricate problems they only miss a lot of details in the process. Generally they chip away at it, dismantling it little by little. They probably realize it's hard with incremental bits of unspectacular work. Judging from the astrological errors though, I'd say that you focus on the right to keep going in demanding. An outside you're been following you all for months at a time, you may be prone to crumble dramatically.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) My brother Tom and I used to be a softball team in Santa Cruz. I played field base and he was the pitcher. For one game he showed up with a new glove that still had the price tag hanging. I asked him if he was going to flip it off. Nope," he said. "It's totally different the bottom and give me an advantage." That day he pitched one of his best games ever. His pitch seemed to have more power than left the bottom of his hand. When they even meant they're been motivated. I don't think so. In fact, my theory is that because their task was so intensive, new as on the opposing base negotiated the fact that it was affecting their concentration. I suggest you try a similar strategy, Gem.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) A famous act of mental Edem King has incorporated performance art into his creative against-reality behaviors. Whether a mystery he develops as a character or whether he reveals the effects of the victims they experienced as children. The slaps of his act that King blows up reveal their fantasies is meant to expose the holy water debated there way back when. Could you connect from a similar about

connection? If you have any interest as to the growth from any insights, religious or otherwise, you're an invaluable piece of evidence.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) In an old "star" book, I read that the starship medical facility working there calls the needs to start a hydroplaned glider. The star doctor who has a high sense of shock and a gift for healing them sends it for why it's the healing. It's with such a trust, right? Now I know how Hippocrates felt. He complains, "When the King needed for to be a hero!" (Ancient Greek physician Hippocrates is referred to as the "father of Medicine" because of his ancient influence on the healing profession.) I suspect that sometimes now. Leo you may be in a position since the sign doctor's office has been closed. You should carry out the assignment with considerable grace. It'll get off for you in the long run — probably as much you can't imagine right now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) In ancient Chinese song, "loosely" the things, there is a crack in everything. I think have the light gets in." From what I can tell, Virgo the week ahead will be one of the best times all year for enhancing the light that comes through the cracks. In fact, I urge you to consider making the mistake in LEO — maybe oversteering now a few new cracks — so that the really shining light can pour down on you effortlessly.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) When was the last time you created a masterpiece. Libra I'm not necessarily talking about a work of art. It might have been an exquisite dinner you prepared for people you love... or a temporary alliance you forged that allowed you to accomplish the impossible... or a scary fun adventure you took that turned you into a super human being with a new authoritative standing. Whether your last four dearest happened seven weeks ago or years ago, the sign is given is that you're due for another one. The creative rhythms are compelling to make you act like an artist again.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Why is everything so easily questioned, right now? Should you be worried now, the numbers been sucked out of your life? I have you lost your right? Personally, I think you're doing better than you



Aquarius

(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

The mercurial spiritual soul known as the Church of the Subversive values one treasure above all others: not salvation, not enlightenment, not holiness, but rather **Slack**. And what is **Slack**? It is a state of being in which everything flows smoothly — a frame of mind so unfettered and at ease that the entire universe just naturally cooperates with you. When you're got abundant reserves of **Slack**, you don't strain and struggle to make damned events unfold, and you don't create things you don't really need. You're surrendering to the greater intelligence that guides your life and it provides you with a shock for attracting only what's truly satisfying. **Happy Slack Week, Aquarius!** I suspect you will have loads of that good stuff, which means your freedom to be a peak, rather the self will be a peak.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) I wrote poet laureate Robert Frost and discuss his poem "Dylannole." The soulful melody many of the Rhude of the human body are named with English words, at least are: not the melior of a woman who's actually involved. The Anglo Saxon did have a word for it, he noted, after which also referred to the look of moonlight on the water. Too long ago! I've concluded, however, a vocabulary that ignores such an important part of human experience. Your assignment, Sagittarius, is to correct for any problems caused by your language in your own spirit. If you're been busy about articulating your meaning or needs, then please activate your deeper intelligence. If there's a situation in your life that's suffering from a sloppy use of words, activate it. We know with greater speed. You would even learn more new words or borrow good ones from foreign tongues.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Standup comedian Jay Barker says that when he writes such of his jokes, he's thinking that all he needs to do is make it funny enough to get at least 10 percent of the audience to laugh at it. More than three is funny and he hopes he does get more. Still, he can put get those three. In others, he will always get a lot of work in his career profession. In accordance with the astrological rhythms, Capricorn, I urge you to adopt a similar approach. To be successful in the coming days, you don't need an approved rating of 40 percent.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) "Completely gets us much information all day long that they lose their common sense" and enter Cardozo. Then many decades ago, with about a thousand times more in 2010 it takes almost concentration not to be fascinated with this. But this merely your message, there. Its obviously meant for you to be a lesson of common sense in the coming days. "Some of your dates with destiny you will have to be earthly undisturbed with grounded and in close touch with your body's intuition. It that requires you to cut back dramatically on the volume of information you take in, so be it.

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Curses, Filled Again

When a woman reported that a man exposed himself to her and her children, police in Mesa, Ariz., knuckled on the apartment door of upstairs neighbor Michael Polley, 45 (he seemed) with his pants still around his ankles. Court records noted he became "immediately angry" at being interrupted and began cursing at the officers, who arrested him. (Phoenix's *Arizona Republic*)

Police said Jerome Taylor, 30, entered a restaurant in Hartford, Conn., wearing a mask, pulled what looked like a gun on the cooks and demanded money. The cooks refused and grabbed their knives. Taylor promptly apologized and stated it was all just a joke, and leaving the "gun" was only an offense. (Hartford's *WVIT-TV*)

Police alerted to the theft of a 50-inch television of a delivery truck in Auburn, Wash., arrested Jonathan Barnes, 22, when they spotted right outside the police station pushing a shopping cart containing the stolen set. (Seattle's *Post-Intelligencer*)

Melodious Mutants

Japanese scientists started breeding mice that sing like birds. The researchers at the University of Osaka genetically engineered the mice to put off the *Utricle Mouse Project*, which specializes in attempts to see what develops. "We checked the newly born mice one by one," lead researcher Akihiro Uchikawa said. "One day we found a mouse that was singing like a bird." He explained the "singing mouse" was a random mutation, but that the trait has been used to breed 100 of them so far and will be used to breed more like it. "I was surprised because I had been expecting mice that are different in physical shape," Uchikawa said, adding that the project had also produced "a mouse with short limbs and a tail like a bird's tail." (Agence France Press)

Drinking-Class Heroes

Defiant attorney Tom Hudson helped his client beat DUI charges after the prosecution presented live evidence in video of Ronald Devine, at a DUI stop in Sonoma, Fla. Hudson hired a private investigator to videotape on-duty law enforcement officers on during the same driving maneuvers that officers cite as reasons for suspicion: wide turns, crossing double yellow lines and riding on lane markings. After comparing video, Judge David Deakin declared that Devine's driving was consistent evidence of impaired driving and dismissed the charges. (Sonoma's *Herald-Tribune*)

A University entertainment firm in Des Moines credits new office drinking buddies for hire. "It's a pleasant companion who can relieve a boring evening," says Yoko Peters, head of Real Party, which

also organizes weddings and birthdays. "Virtually all of our people are talented. They can play guitar, sing or write poetry. Today you may want to talk about art and tomorrow to read Flaubert." (Agence France Press)

Reasonable Explanations

When police arrested Michael Elton, 25, of half a dozen house burglaries in San Antonio, Texas, he explained he had to keep committing the burglaries so he could afford to pay his attorney \$150 a week to keep him out of jail. (San Antonio's *RSAF-TV*)

Police who arrested William Linton, 45, in suburban Cleveland on suspicion of driving drunk could be explained, "Garry Osbourne and his mouse made me drink." (Cleveland's *WTRB-TV*)

All Ramways Lead to Russia

Russia's magnetic north pole is moving toward Russia at the rate of nearly 40 miles a year. Scientists attribute the shift to magnetic changes in the planet's core. One consequence of the shift was the closing of Helsinki's Tempus International Airport for one week to remember its main north-south runway to reflect its new magnetic alignment. (The Tampa Tribune)

Bottom-Line Justice

Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour fired warden Gladys and Justice Scott, who had served 36 years of their life sentence for armed robbery on the condition that Gladys, 36, donate a kidney to Barbour, 38, when given dialysis. Barbour explained he decided to order their release so the state wouldn't have to pay for Justice Scott's treatment. (Olatimes)

The Eyes Have It

Prince Frederic Von Anhalt, 68, the husband of celebrity Zsa Zsa Gabor, glued an eye that when he accidentally grabbed his wife's and glue instead of eye drops. "It was stupid," Von Anhalt said after a doctor at an eye clinic in Beverly Hills, Calif., repaired the damage. Gabor, 93, suffered a similar eye injury years ago, according to her daughter, Princess Bibiane, when she accidentally used "lucky glue" on her eyelashes. (CNN)

Price of Denial

A military jury at Fort Meade, Md., sentenced Lt. Col. Terrence Sakin to six months in military prison and financial fines after he disobeyed orders to deploy to Afghanistan because he doubts whether President Barack Obama was born in the United States and therefore questioned his eligibility to be commander in chief. He said he would have gladly deployed if Obama's original birth certificate were released and proved authentic. (Associated Press)

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⊗ CALCOKU BY JOSH REYNOLDS

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★★★

For the following, the numbers in the empty cells in each row and column. The numbers in each empty cell must contain no less than the largest number in the row or column. The numbers in the empty cells should be filled in with the largest number in the top corner. A number can be repeated within a row or column, but not in the same row or column.



⊗ SUDOKU BY JOSH REYNOLDS

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★★★

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row, column, each column, and each 3x3 box contains all the numbers from 1 to 9. The same numbers cannot be repeated in a row or column.

★ = MODERATE ★★ = CHALLENGING ★★★ = HARD BOY — FIND ANSWERS & CROSSWORD IN THE CLASSIFIEDS SECTION

7D Comic Fans

We received a lot of suggestions for new cartoons and are considering options. Look for changes soon!

BLISS BY HARDY BLISS



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Feb. 18: Dartmouth Skiway

Feb. 25: Ragged Mountain

March 4: Sugarbush

March 11: Bolton Valley

March 18: Pico Mountain

March 25: Stowe Mountain Resort

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